This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES
3 3433 07493610 9

(Carleton)

THE MISER;

OR,

THE CONVICTS OF LISNAMONA.

BY

WILLIAM CARLETON,

AUTHOR OF "NEAL MALONE," "TRAITS AND STORIES OF THE IRISH PEASANTRY," "FATHER BUTLER," &c. &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL I.

PHILADELPHIA:

CAREY & HART.

1840.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
233277
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS.
1901

PREFACE.

In consequence of the very favourable reception which the tale of Fardorougha the Miser met with in the pages of our admirable Irish Periodical, the Dublin University Magazine, I have been induced to submit it in a separate and collected form to a still wider circle of readers. This was rendered the more necessary, as much of the force and connexion of the story was lost in consequence of its not having appeared with regularity in the consecutive numbers of the periodical I have mentioned.

Most of the *dramatis personæ* of the story are, in point of fact, drawn from life; the chief character in it, that of the miser himself, is one to which I have never met anything similar in books, yet I beg to assure the reader, that I have known and beheld in real life most of the struggles between avarice and affection which I have attempted to depict in the narrative. I knew the original well; and many readers in the county of Louth will at once recognise the little withered old man, who always wore his great coat (cothamore) about his shoulders, and kept perpetually sucking in his cheeks while engaged in conversation. It is also true that he was nearly fourteen years married before he became a father; his wife having borne him but one son, the only issue they ever had.

It is indeed surprising to think how easy a thing it is to give to truth the appearance and impress of fiction. The miser's conduct at the residence of the County Treasurer, who absconded with his money, is so well remembered, that it is now believed by the people that the descendants of that public delinquent have never prospered since, in consequence of his curses. This will be the more easily

understood by my readers, when they are informed, that it is the opinion of the lower Irish that a curse, when once uttered, must fall either upon the object of its malignity, or upon *something else;* and that it will hover seven years in the air, rather than fail in accomplishing some evil purpose analogous to that of him who uttered it; that is, when it cannot fulfil his intention upon the person against whom it was originally directed.

With respect to his wife, I have only to say, that by those who know as I do the qualities which prevail among the humble females of my country, her character will immediately be recognised as one which they have frequently seen. Honor O'Donovan is no creature of the imagination, but, on the contrary, a likeness faithful and true to the virtues of thousands whose glowing piety, meek endurance, and unexampled fortitude have risen triumphant over some of the severest trials of domestic life. Dear to my heart is the memory of the beloved being whose virtues are but faintly shadowed forth in the portrait of her which I have drawn. Oh, many a portrait of equal piety and purity is to be found under the humble roof of the Irish cottage and the Irish farmhouse; for in no country on the earth, or among no class of females, could the eye of an observer discover greater truth, sincerer religion, or firmer principle, than among the wives and daughters of the Irish peasantry. We have indeed a right to be proud of our countrywomen; and ungenerous must the heart of any Irish writer be, who will neglect to record virtues that are so worthy of imitation.

It is now some time since I have been before the public, and I consequently feel much anxiety as to the reception I may experience at its hand. I cannot forget, however, that it has hitherto treated me with great kindness; and I earnestly hope that it will continue to manifest the same indulgence to one whose greatest happiness has been that his humble efforts were deemed worthy of its good opinion.

Dublin, June, 1839.

FARDOROUGHA THE MISER;

OR,

THE CONVICTS OF LISNAMONA.

CHAPTER I.

On a gentle declivity facing the south, and sheltered by a sharp *Esker* or land-ridge, lay the long, low, white-washed farmhouse of Fardorougha Donovan of Lisnamona. There was little of artificial ornament about the place, but much of the rough heart-stirring wildness of nature, as it appeared in a strong, vigorous district, well cultivated, but without being tamed down by those finer and more graceful touches, which nowadays mark the skilful hand of the scientific agriculturist.

To the left waved a beautiful hazel glen, which gradually expanded into the medows above mentioned. Up behind the house stood an ancient plantation of whitethorn, which, during the month of May, diffused its fragrance, its beauty, and its melody over the whole farm. The plain garden was hedged round by the graceful poplar, while here and there were studded over the fields either single trees or small groups of mountain-ash, a tree still more beautiful than the former. The small dells about the farm were closely covered with blackthorn and holly, with an occasional oak shooting up from some little cliff,

and towering sturdily over its lowly companions. Here grew a thick interwoven mass of dog-tree, and upon a wild hedge-row, leaning like a beautiful wife upon a rugged husband, might be seen, supported by clumps of blackthorn, that most fragrant and exquisite of creepers, the delicious honeysuckle. Add to this the neat appearance of the farm itself, with its meadows and corn-fields waving to the soft sunny breeze of summer, and the reader may admit, that, without possessing any striking features of pictorial effect, it would, nevertheless, be difficult to find an up-lying farm upon which the eye could rest with greater satisfaction.

This brief description we deem it necessary to give of a place which, however humble, will be found the scene of the darkest and tenderest passions of the human heart.

It was on one of those nights in August, when the moon and stars shine through an atmosphere clear and cloudless with a mildness of lustre almost continental, that a horseman, advancing at a rapid pace, turned off a remote branch of road up a narrow lane, and, dismounting before a neat whitewashed cottage, gave a quick and impatient knock at the door. Almost instantly, out of a small window that opened on hinges, was protruded a broad female face, surrounded, by way of nightcap, with several folds flannel, that had originally been white.

"Is Mary Moan at home?" said the horseman.

"For a maricle, ay!" replied the female; "who's *down*, in the name o' goodness?"

"Why, thin, I'm thinkin' you'll be smilin' whin you hear it," replied the messenger. "The sorra one else than Honor Donovan, that's now marrid upon Fardorougha Donovan to the tune of thirteen year. Bedad, time for her, any how; but, sure it 'ill be good whin it comes, we're thinkin'."

"Well, betther late than never; the Lord be praised for all his gifts, any how! Put your horse down to the mountin' stone, and I'll be wid you in half a jiffy, acushla."

She immediately drew in her head, and ere the messenger had well placed his horse at the aforesaid stirrup, or mounting-stone, which is an indispensable adjunct to the midwife's cottage, she issued out, cloaked and bonneted; for, in point of fact, her practice was so extensive, and the demands upon her attendance were so incessant, that she seldom, if ever, slept, or went to bed, unless partially dressed. And such was her habit of vigilance, that she ultimately became an illustration of the old Roman proverb, *Non dormio omnibus;* that is to say, she could sleep as sound as a top to every possible noise except a knock at the door, to which she might be said, during the greater part of her professional life, to have been instinctively awake.

Having ascended the mounting-stone, and placed herself on the crupper, the guide and she, while passing down the narrow and difficult lane, along which they could proceed but slowly and with caution, entered into the following dialogue, she having first turned up the hood of her cloak over her bonnet, and tied a spotted cotton kerchief round her neck.

"This," said the guide, who was Fardorougha Donovan's servantman, "is a quare enough business, as some o' the nabours do be sayin'; marrid upon one another beyant thirteen year, an' ne'er a siga of a haporth till now. Why then begad it *is* quare."

"Whisht, whisht," replied Molly, with an expression of mysterious and superior knowledge; "don't be spakin' about what you don't understaud; sure, nuttin's impossible to God, avick—don't you know that?"

"Oh, bedad, sure enough, *that* we must allow, whether or not; still—"

"Very well; seein' that, what more have we to say, barrin' to hould our tongues. Childre sent late always come either for great good or great sarra to thier paarents; an' God grant that this may be for good to the honest people, for indeed honest people they are, by all accounts. But what myself wonders at is, that Honor Don-

ovan never once opened her lips to me about it. However, God's will be done! The Lord send her safe over all her throubles, poor woman! And, now that we're out o' this thief of a lane, lay an for the bare life, and never heed me. I'm as good a horseman as yourself; and, indeed, I've a good right, for I'm an ould hand at it."

"I'm thinkin'," she added, after a short silence, "it's odd I never was much acquainted with the Donovans. I'm tould they're a hard pack, that loves the money, honest as they are."

"Faix," replied her companion, "let Fardorougha alone for knowin' the value of a shillin'! they're not in Europe can hould a harder grip of one."

His master, in fact, was a hard frugal man, and his mistress a woman of a somewhat similar character: both were strictly honest, but, like many persons to whom God has denied offspring, their hearts had for a considerable time before been placed upon money as their idol: for, in truth, the affections must be fixed upon something, and we generally find that where children are denied, the world comes in and hardens by its influence the best and tenderest sympathies of humanity.

After a journey of two miles they came out on a haytrack, that skirted an extensive and level sweep of meadow, along which they proceeded with as much speed as a pillionless midwife was capable of bearing.

Ere arriving at the house they were met by Fardorougha himself, a small man, with dark, but well-set features, which, being at no time very placid, appeared now to be absolutely gloomy, yet marked by strong and profound anxiety.

"Thank God!" he exclaimed on meeting them. "Is this Mary Moan?"

"It is, it is," she exclaimed: "how are all within? Am I in time?"

"Only poorly," he returned: "you are, I hope."

The midwife, when they reached the door, got herself dismounted in all haste, and was about entering the

house, when Fardorougha, laying his hand upon her shoulder, said in a tone of voice tremulous with apprehension,

"I need say nothing to you: what you can do you will do; but one thing I expect—if you see danger, call in assistance."

"It's all in the hands o' God, Fardorougha, acushla: be as aisy in your mind as you can: if there's need for more help you'll hear it; so keep the man an' horse both ready."

She then blessed herself, and entered the house, repeating a short prayer, or charm, which was supposed to possess uncommon efficacy in relieving cases of the nature she was then called upon to attend.

Fardorougha Donovan was a man of shrewd sense, and of strong, but not obvious or flexible feeling; that is to say, on strong occasions he felt accordingly, and exhibited very remarkable symptoms of the feeling that swayed him. In matters of a less important character, he was either deficient in sensibility altogether, or it affected him so slightly as not to be perceptible. What his disposition might have been had his parental affections and domestic sympathies been cultivated by the tender intercourse which subsists between a parent and his children, it is not easy to say. On such occasions many a new and delightful sensation—many a sweet trait of affection previously unknown—and, oh! many, many a fresh impulse of rapturous emotion never before felt—gushes out of the heart; all of which, were it not for the existence of ties so delightful, might have there lain sealed up for ever. Where is the man who does not remember the strange impression of tumultuous delight which he experienced on finding himself a husband? And who does not recollect that nameless charm, amounting almost to a new sense, which pervaded his whole being with tenderness and transport on kissing the rose-bud lips of his first-born babe? It is indeed by the ties of domestic life that the purity and affection and the gen-

eral character of the human heart are best tried. What is there more beautiful than to see that fountain of tenderness multiplying its affections instead of diminishing them, according as claim after claim arises to make fresh demands upon its love. Love, and especially parental love, like jealousy, increases by what it feeds on. But, oh! from what an unknown world of exquisite enjoyment are they shut out to whom Providence has not vouchsafed those beloved beings on whom the heart lavishes the whole fulness of its rapture! No wonder that their own affections should wither in the cold gloom of disappointed hope, or their hearts harden into that moody spirit of wordly-mindedness which adopts for its offspring the miser's idol.

Whether Fardorougha felt the want of children acutely or otherwise, could not be inferred from any visible indication of regret on his part by those who knew him. His own wife, whose facilities of observation were so great and so frequent, was only able to suspect in the affirmative. For himself, he neither murmured nor repined, but she could perceive that after a few years had passed, a slight degree of gloom began to settle on him, and an anxiety concerning his crops, and his few cattle, and the produce of his farm. He also began to calculate the amount of what might be saved from the fruits of their united industry. Sometimes, but indeed upon rare occasions, his temper appeared inclining to be irascible or impatient; but in general it was grave, cold, and inflexible, without any outbreaks of passion, or the slightest disposition to mirth. His wife's mind, however, was by no means so cold as his, nor so free from the traces of that secret regret which preyed upon it. She both murmured and repined, and often in terms which drew from Fardorougha a cool rebuke for her want of resignation to the will of God. As years advanced, however, her disappointment became harassing even to herself; and now that hope began to die away, her heart gradually partook of the cold worldly spirit which had seized upon the dis-

position of her husband. Though cultivating but a small farm, which they held at a smart rent, yet, by the dint of frugality and incessant diligence, they were able to add a little each year to the small stock of money which they had contrived to put together. Still would the unhappy reflection that they were childless steal painfully and heavily over them; the wife would sometimes murmur, and the husband reprove her, but in a tone so cool and indifferent that she could not avoid concluding that his own want of resignation, though not expressed, was at heart equal to her own. Each also became somewhat religious, and both remarkable for a punctual attendance upon the rites of their church, and that in proportion as the love of temporal things overcame them. In this manner they lived upward of thirteen years, when Mrs. Donovan declared herself to be in that situation which in due time rendered the services of Mary Moan necessary.

From the moment this intimation was given, and its truth confirmed, a faint light, not greater than the dim and trembling lustre of a single star, broke in upon the darkened affections and worldly spirit of Fardorougha Donovan. Had the announcement taken place within any reasonable period after his marriage, before he had become sick of disappointment, or had surrendered his heart from absolute despair to an incipient spirit of avarice, it would no doubt have been hailed with all the eager delight of unblighted hope and vivid affection; but now a new and subtle habit had been superinduced, after the last cherished expectation of the heart had departed; a spirit of foresight and severe calculation descended on him, and had so nearly saturated his whole being, that he could not for some time actually determine whether the knowledge of his wife's situation was more agreeable to his affection, or repugnant to the parsimonious disposition which had quickened his heart into an energy incompatible with natural benevolence, and the perception of those tender ties which spring up from the relations of domestic life.

For a considerable time this struggle between the two principles went on; sometimes a new hope would spring up, attended in the back-ground by a thousand affecting circumstances; on the other hand, some gloomy and undefinable dread of exigency, distress, and ruin, would wring his heart and sink his spirits down to positive misery. Notwithstanding this conflict between growing avarice and affection, the star of the father's love had risen, and though, as we have already said, its light was dim and unsteady, yet the moment a single opening occurred in the clouded mind, there it was to be seen serene and pure, a beautiful emblem of undying and solitary affection struggling with the cares and angry passions of life. By degrees the husband's heart became touched by the hopes of his younger years, former associations revived, and remembrances of past tenderness, though blunted in a heart so much changed, came over him like the breath of fragrance that has nearly passed away. He began, therefore, to contemplate the event without foreboding, and by the time the looked-for period arrived, if the world and its debasing influences were not utterly overcome, yet nature and the quickening tenderness of a father's feelings had made a considerable progress in a heart from which they had been long banished.

Far different from all this was the history of his wife since her perception of an event so delightful. In her was no bitter and obstinate principle subversive of affection to be overcome. For although she had in latter years sank into the painful apathy of a hopeless spirit, and given herself somewhat to the world, yet no sooner did the unexpected light dawn upon her, than her whole soul was filled with exultation and rapture. The world and its influence passed away like a dream, and her heart melted into a habit of tenderness at once so novel and exquisite, that she often assured her husband she had never felt happiness before.

Such are the respective states of feeling in which our readers find Fardorougha Donovan and his wife, upon an

occasion the consequences of which run too far into futurity for us to determine at present whether they are to end in happiness or misery.

For a considerable time that evening before the arrival of Mary Moan, the males of the family had taken up their residence in an inside kiln, where, after having kindled a fire in the draught hole, or what the Scotch call the "logie," they sat and chatted in that kind of festive spirit which such an event uniformly produces among the servants of a family. Fardorougha himself remained for the most part with them, that is to say, except while ascertaining from time to time the situation of his wife. His presence, however, was only a restraint upon their good humour, and his niggardly habits caused some uncomplimentary epithets during his shorts visits of inquiry. It is customary upon such occasions, as soon as the mistress of the family is taken ill, to ask the servants to drink "an easy bout to the misthress, sir, and a speedy recovery, not forgettin' a safe landin' to the youngsther, and, like a Christmas compliment, many of them to you both! Whoo! death alive, but that's fine stuff. Oh, be gorra, the misthress can't but thrive wid that in the house. Thank you, sir, an' wishin' her once more safe over her throubles!—Divil a better misthress ever," &c., &c., &c.

Here, however, there was nothing of the kind. Fardorougha's heart in the first instance was set against the expense, and, besides, its present broodings resembled the throes of pain which break out from the stupor that presses so heavily upon the exhausted functions of life in the crisis of a severe fever. He could not, in fact, rest or remain for any length of time in the same spot. With a slow but troubled step he walked backward and forward, sometimes uttering indistinct ejaculations and broken sentences, such as no one could understand. At length he approached his own servants, and addressed the messenger, whose name was Nogher M'Cormick.

"Nogher," said he, "I'm throubled."

"Throubled! dad, Fardorougha, you ought to be a happy

and a thankful man this night, that is, if God sinds the misthress safe over it, as I hope he will, plase goodness."

"I'm poer, Nogher, I'm poor, and here's a family comin'."

"Faith, take care it's not sin you're committin' by spakin' as you're doin'."

"But you know I'm poor, Nogher."

"But I know you're *not*, Fardorougha; but I'm afraid, if God hasn't said it, that your heart's too much fixed upon the world. Be me faiks, it's on your knees you ought to be this same night, thankin' the Almighty for his goodness, an' not grumblin' an' sthreelin' about the place, flyin' in the face of God for sendin' you an' your wife a blessin'; for sure I hear the Scripther says that all childre's a blessin' if they're resaved as sich; 'an' vo be to the man,' says Scripther, 'dat's born wid a millstone about his neck, esphishally if he's cast into the *say*.' I know you pray enough, but be me sowl, it hasn't improved your morals, or it's the misthress's health we'd be drinkin' in a good bottle of whiskey at the present time. Faix, myself wouldn't be much surprised if she had a hard twist in quensequence; an' if she does, the fau't's your own an' not ours, for we're willin' as the flowers of May to drink all sorts o' good luck to her."

"Nogher," said the other, "it's truth a great dale what you've said—maybe all of it."

"Faith, I know," returned Nogher, "that about the whiskey it's parfit gospek."

"In one thing I'll be advised by you, and that is, I'll go to my knees and pray to God to set my heart right, if it's wrong: I feel strange—strange, Nogher—happy, an' not happy."

"You needn't go to your knees at all," replied Nogher, "if you give us the whiskey; or, if you do pray, be in airnest, that your heart may be inclined to give it."

"You desarve none for them words," said Fardorougha, who felt that Nogher's humour jarred upon the better

feelings that were rising within him; "you desarve none, and you'll get none—for the present at least, an' I'm only a fool for spakin' to you."

He then retired to the upper part of the kiln, where, in a dark corner, he knelt with a troubled heart, and prayed to God,

We doubt not but such readers as possess feeling will perceive that Fardorougha was not only an object at this particular period of much interest, but also entitled to sincere sympathy. Few men in his circumstances could, or probably would, so earnestly struggle with a predominant passion as he did, though without education, or such a knowledge of the world as might enable him, by any observation of the human heart in others, to understand the workings of his own. He had not been ten minutes at prayer when the voice of his female servant was heard in loud and exulting tones, calling out ere she approached the kiln itself,

"Fardorougha, *ca woul thu?** Where's my *footin'*,† masther? Where's my arles? Come in, come in, you're a wantin' to kiss your son; the misthress is dyin' till you kiss your son."

The last words were uttered as she entered the kiln.

"Dyin'!" he repeated, "the misthress dyin'—oh, Susy, let a thousand childre go before *her*: dyin'! did you say dyin'?"

"Ay did I; an' it's truth too, but it's wid joy she's dyin' to see you kiss one of the purtiest young boys in all the barony of Lisnamona—myself's over head and ears in love with him inready."

He gave a rapid glance upward, so much so, that it was scarcely perceptible, and immediately accompanied her into the house. The child in the mean time had

* Where are you?

† To pay one's footing means in Ireland to give a present to a servant for any agreeable circumstance or event that happens for the *first* time; or upon entering any particular place of an humble character in order to testify your approval of what you may see.

been dressed, and lay on its mother's arm in the bed when its father entered. He approached the bedside and glanced at it; then at the mother who lay smiling beside it; she extended her hand to him while the soft tears of delight ran quietly down her cheeks. When he seized her hand he stooped to kiss her, but she put her other hand up and said,

"No, no, you must kiss *him* first."

He instantly stooped over the babe, took it in his arms, looked long and earnestly upon it, put it up near him, again gave it a long intense gaze, after which he raised its little mouth to his own, and then imprinted the father's first kiss upon the fragrant lips of his beloved first-born. Having gently deposited the precious babe upon its mother's breast, he caught her hand, and imprinted upon her lips a kiss; but to those who understand it we need not describe it; to those who cannot, we could give no adequate notion of that which we are able in no way to describe than by saying that it would seem as if the condensed enjoyment of a whole life were concentrated into that embrace of the child and mother.

When this tender scene was over the midwife commenced,

"Well if ever a man had rason to be thank—"

"Silence, woman," he exclaimed, in a voice which hushed her almost into terror.

"Let him alone," said the wife, addressing her, "let him alone, I know what he feels."

"No," he replied, "even you, Honora, don't know it; my heart, my heart went astray, and there, undher God and my Saviour, is the being that will be the salvation of his father."

His wife understood him and was touched; the tears fell fast from her eyes, and extending her hand to him, she said as he clasped it,

"Sure, Fardorougha, the world won't be as much in your heart now, nor your temper so dark as it was?"

He made no reply, but placing his other hand over his eyes, he sat in that posture for some minutes. On raising his head, the tears were running as if involuntarily down his cheeks.

"Honor," said he, "I'll go out for a little; you can tell Mary Moan where anything's to be had; let them all be trated, so that they don't take too much; an', Mary Moan, you won't be forgotten."

He then passed out, and did not appear for upward of an hour, nor could any one of them tell where he had been.

"Well," said Honor, after he had left the room, "we're now married near fourteen years; and until this night I never see him shed a tear."

"But sure, acushla, if anything can touch a father's heart the sight of his first child will. Now keep yourself aisy, avourneen, and tell me where the whiskey an' anything else that may be a wantin' is, till I give these crathurs of sarvints a dhrop of something to comfort thim."

At this time, however, Mrs. Donovan's mother and two sisters, who had for some hours previously been sent for, just arrived, a circumstance which once more touched the newly awakened chords of the mother's heart, and gave her that confidence which the presence of "one's own blood," as the people express it, always communicates upon such occasions. After having kissed and admired the babe, and bedewed its face with the warm tears of affection, they piously knelt down, as is the custom among most Irish families, and offered up a short but fervent prayer of gratitude as well for an event so happy, as for her safe delivery, and the future welfare of the mother and child. When this was performed, they set themselves to the distribution of the blithe meat or groaning malt, a duty which the midwife transferred to them with much pleasure, this being a matter which, except in cases of necessity, she considers beneath the dignity of her profession. The servants were ac-

cordingly summoned in due time, and headed by Nogher, soon made their appearance. In events of this nature, servants in Ireland, and, we believe, everywhere else, are always allowed a considerable stretch of good-humoured license in those observations which they are in the habit of making. Indeed, this is not so much an extemporaneous indulgence of wit on their part, as a mere repetition of the set phrases and traditionary apothegms which have been long established among the peasantry; and as they are in general expressive of present satisfaction and good wishes for the future, so would it be looked upon as churlishness, and in some cases a sign of ill-luck, to neglect them on the part of the servants.

"Now," said Honor's mother to the servants of both sexes, "now, childre, that you've aite a trifle, you must taste somethin' in the way of dhrink. It would be too bad on *this* night, above all nights that we've seen yet, not to have a glass to the little stranger's health, at all evints. Here, Nogher, thry this, avick; you never got a glass wid a warmer heart."

Nogher took the liquor, his grave face charged with suppressed humour, and first looking upon his fellow-servants with a countenance so droll yet dry that none but themselves understood it, he then directed a very sober glance at the good woman.

"Thank you, ma'am," he exclaimed; "be goxty, sure enough if our hearts wouldn't get warm now, they'd never warm. A happy night it is for Fardorougha and the misthress, at any rate. I'll engage the stranger was worth waitin' for too. I'll hould a thrifle, he's the beauty o' the world this minnit; an' I'll engage it's breeches we'll have to be gettin' for him some o' these days, the darlin'. Well, here's his health, any way; an' may he—"

"Husht, arogorah!" exclaimed the midwife; "stop, I say—the tree afore the fruit, all the world over: don't you know, an' bad win to you, that if the sthranger was to go to-morrow, as good might come after him, while

the paarent stocks are to the fore. The mother an' the father first, acushla, an' *thin* the sthranger."

"Many thanks to you, Mrs. Moan," replied Nogher, "for settin' me right; sure we'll know somethin' ourselves whin it comes our own turn, plase goodness. If the misthress isn't asleep, by goxty, I'd call in to her, that I'm dhrinkin' her health."

"She's not asleep," said her mother; "an' proud she'll be, poor thing, to hear you, Nogher."

"Misthress!" he said in a loud voice, "are you asleep, ma'am?"

"No, indeed, Nogher," she replied, in a good-humoured tone of voice.

"Well, ma'am," said Nogher, still in a loud voice, and scratching his head, "here's your health! an' now that the ice is bruk—be goxty, an' so it is sure," said he, in an undertone to the rest—"Peggy, behave yourself," he continued to one of the servant-maids, "mockin's catchin': faix, you dunna what's afore yourself yet—beg pardon—I'm forgettin' myself—and now that the ice is *bruk*, ma'am," he resumed, "you must be dacent for the futher. Many a bottle, please goodness, we'll have this way yet. Your health, ma'am, an' a speedy recovery to you—an' a sudden uprise—not forgettin' the masther—long life to him!"

"What!" said the midwife, "are you forgettin' the sthranger?"

Nogher looked her full in the face, and opening his mouth, without saying a word, literally pitched the glass of spirits to the very bottom of his throat.

"Beggin' your pardon, ma'am," he replied, "is it three healths you'd have me dhrink with the one glassful? not myself, indeed; faix, I'd be long sorry to make so little of him; if he was a bit of a *girsha*,* I'd not scruple to give him a corner o' the glass; but, bein' a young

* Little girl.

man, althers the case intirely—he must have a bumper for himself."

"A *girsha!*" said Peggy, his fellow-servant, feeling the indignity just offered to her sex. "Why, thin, bad manners to your assurance for that same! A girsha's as well intitled to a full glass as a gorsoon, any day."

"Husht, a colleen," said Nogher, good-humouredly, "sure, it's takin' patthern by sich a fine example you ought to be. This, Mrs. Moan, is the purty crature I was mentionin' as we came along, that intends to get dovetailed wid myself some o' these days; that is, if she can bring me into good humour, the thief."

"And if it does happen," said Peggy, "you'll have to look sharp afther him, Mrs. Moan. He's pleasant enough now, but I'll be bound no man 'ill know betther how to hang his fiddle behind the door* whin he comes home to us."

"Well, acushla, sure he may, if he likes; but if he does, he knows what's afore him—not sayin' that he ever will, I hope, for it's a woful case whin it comes to *that*,† ahagur."

"Faix, it's a happy story for half the poor wives of the parish that *you are* in it," said Peggy, "sure, only for—"

"*Be dhe husth, Vread, agus glak shogh*—hould your tongue, Peggy, and taste this," said the mother of her misthress, handing her a glass: "If you intind to go together, in the name o' goodness fear God more than the midwife, if you want to have luck an' grace."

"Oh, is it all this?" exclaimed the sly girl; "faix,

* To leave his good humour behind him.

† This refers to an opinion which was prevalent in Ireland with reference to the old class of midwives, viz.: that in cases similar to Honora Donovan's, they possessed the power of transferring the penalty of woman's original guilt to the husband, if he chanced to be brutal. The wife merely giving birth to the offspring, the other bearing all the pain. In many parts of Ireland it is yet believed that they possess this power.

it'll make me *hearty* if I drink so much—bedeed it will. Well, misthress, your health, an' a speedy uprise to you; an' the same to the masther, not forgettin' the sthranger—long life an' good health to him!"

She then put the glass to her lips, and after several small sips, appearing to be so many unsuccessful attempts at overcoming her reluctance to drink it, she at length took courage, and bolting it down, immediately applied her apron to her mouth, making at the same time two or three wry faces, gasping, as if to recover the breath which it did *not* take away from her.

The midwife, in the mean time, felt that the advice just given to Nogher and Peggy contained a clause somewhat more detrimental to her importance than was altogether agreeable to her; and to sit calmly under any imputation that involved a diminution of her authority was not within the code of her practice.

"If they go together," she observed, "it's right to fear God, no doubt; but that's no raison why they shouldn't pay respect to thim that can sarve thim *or otherwise.*"

"Nobody says against that, Mrs. Moan," replied the other; "it's all fair, an' nothin' else."

"A midwife's nuttin' in your eyes, we suppose," rejoined Mrs. Moan; "but maybe there's thim belongin' to you could tell to the conthrairy."

"Oblaged to you, we suppose, for your sarvices—an' we're not denying that aither."

"For me sarvices—maybe thim same sarvices warn't very sweet or treaclesome to some o' thim," she rejoined, with a mysterious and somewhat indignant toss of the head.

"Well, well," said the other, in a friendly tone, "that makes no maxim one way or the other, only dhrink this—sure we're not goin' to quarrel about it, any how."

"God forbid, Honor More; but sure it'ud ill become me to hear my own carrecther—no, no, avourneen," she exclaimed, putting back the glass, "I can't take it this-

a-way; it doesn't agree wid me; you must put a grain o' shugar an' a dhrop o' bilin' water to it. It may do very well *hard** for the servants, but I'm not used to that."

"I herd that myself afore," observed Nogher, "that she never dhrinks hard whiskey. Well, myself never tasted punch but wanst, an' be goxty its great dhrink. Death alive, Honora More," he continued, in his most insinuating manner, "make us all a sup. Sure, blood alive, this is not a common night, afther what God has sint us; Fardorougha himself would allow you, if he was here; deed, bedad, he as good as promised me he would; an' you know we have the young customer's health to dhrink yet."

"Throth, an' you ought," said the midwife; "the boy says nuttin' but the thruth—it's not a common night; an' if God has given Fardorougha substance, he shouldn't begridge a little, if it was only to show a grateful heart."

"Well, well," said Honora More—which means great Honora, in opposition to her daughter, Fardorougha's wife; this being an epithet adopted for the purpose of contra-distinguishing the members of a family when called by the same name—"Well," said she, "I suppose it's as good. My own heart, dear knows, is not in a thrifle, only I have my doubts about Fardorougha. However, what's done can't be undone; so, once we mix it, he'll be too late to spake if he comes in, any way."

The punch was accordingly mixed, and they were in the act of sitting down to enjoy themselves with more comfort when Fardorougha entered. As before, he was silent and disturbed, neither calm nor stern, but labouring, one would suppose, under strong feelings of a decidedly opposite character. On seeing the punch made, his brow gathered into something like severity: he looked quickly at his mother-in-law, and was about

* Pure, unmixed.

to speak, but pausing a moment, he sat down, and, after a little time, said in a kind voice,

"It's right, it's right—for *his* sake an' on *his* account, have it; but, Honora, let there be no waste."

"Sure we had to make it for Mrs. Moan whether or not," said his mother-in-law; "she can't drink it hard, poor woman."

Mrs. Moan, who had gone to see her patient, having heard his voice again, made her appearance with the child in her arms, and with all the importance which such a burden usually bestows upon persons of her calling.

"Here," said she, presenting him the infant, "take a proper look at this fellow. That I may never, if a finer swaddy ever crossed my hands. Throth, if you wor dead to-morrow he'd be mistaken for you—your born image—the sorra thing else—eh, alanna—the Lord love my son—faix, you've daddy's nose upon you, any how—an' his chin to a turn. Oh thin, Fardorougha, but there's many a couple rowlin' in wealth that 'ud be proud to have the likes of him; an' that must die and let it all go to sthrangers, or to them that doesn't care about them, 'ceptin' to get grabbin' at what they have, an' that think every day a year that they're about the sod. What! *manim-an*—kiss your child, man alive. That I may never, but he looks at the darlin' as if it was a sod of turf! Throth, you're not worthy of havin' such a bully."

Fardorougha, during this dialogue, held the child in his arms and looked upon it earnestly as before, but without betraying any visible indication of countenance that could enable a spectator to estimate the nature of what passed within him. At length there appeared in his eye a barely perceptible expression of benignity, which, however, soon passed away, and was replaced by a shadow of gloom and anxiety. Nevertheless, in compliance with the commands of the midwife, he kissed its lips, after which the servants all gathered around it, each lavishing upon the

little urchin those hyperbolical expressions of flattery, which, after all, most parents are willing to receive as something approximating to Gospel truth.

"Bedad," said Nogher, "that fellow'll be the flower of the Donovans, if God spares him; be goxty, I'll engage he'll give the purty girls many a sore heart yet; he'll play the dickens wid 'em, or I'm not here—awough! do you hear how the young rogue gives tongue at that; the sorra one o' the shaver but knows what I'm sayin'."

Nogher always had an eye to his own comfort, no matter under what circumstances he might be placed. Having received the full glass, he grasped his master's hand, and in the usual set phrases, to which, however, was added much *extempore* matter of his own, he drank the baby's health, congratulating the parents in his own blunt way upon this accession to their happiness. The other servants continued to pour out their praises in terms of delight and astonishment at his accomplishments and beauty, each, in imitation of Nogher, concluding with a toast in nearly the same words.

How sweet from other lips is the praise of those we love! Fardorougha, who, a moment before, looked upon his infant's face with an unmoved countenance, felt incapable of withstanding the flattery of his own servants when uttered in favour of the child. His eye became complacent, and while Nogher held his hand, a slight pressure in return was proof sufficient that his heart beat in accordance with the hopes they expressed of all that the undeveloped future might bestow upon him.

When their little treat was over, the servants withdrew for the night, and Fardorougha himself, still labouring under an excitement so complicated and novel, retired rather to shape his mind to some definite tone of feeling than to seek repose.

How strange is life, and how mysteriously connected is the woe or the weal of a single family with the great mass of human society. We beg the reader to stand with

us upon a low, sloping hill, a little to the left of Fardorougha's house, and, after having solemnized his heart by a glance at the starry gospel of the skies, to cast his eye upon the long whitewashed dwelling, as it shines faintly in the visionary distance of a moonlight night. How full of tranquil beauty is the hour, and how deep the silence, except when it is broken by the loud baying of the watch-dog, as he barks in sullen fierceness at his own echo; or perhaps there is nothing heard but the *sugh* of the mountain river, as with booming sound it rises and falls in the distance, filling the ear of midnight with its wild and continuous melody. Look around and observe the spirit of repose which sleeps on the face of nature, think upon the dream of human life, and of all the inexplicable wonders which are read from day to day in that miraculous page—the heart of man. Neither your eye nor imagination need pass beyond that humble roof before you, in which it is easy to perceive, by the lights passing at this unusual hour across the windows, that there is something added either to their joy or to their sorrow. There is the mother, in whose heart was accumulated the unwasted tenderness of years, forgetting all the past in the first intoxicating influence of an unknown ecstasy, and looking to the future with the eager aspirations of affection. There is the husband, too, in whose heart the lank devil of the avaricious, the famine-struck god of the miser, is even now contending with the almost extinguished love which springs up in a father's bosom on the sight of his first-born.

Reader, who can tell whether the entrancing visions of the happy mother, or the gloomy anticipations of her apprehensive husband, are more prophetic of the destiny which is before their child? Many, indeed, and various are the hopes and fears felt under that roof, and deeply will their lights and shadows be blended in the life of the being whose claims are so strong upon their love. There, for some time past the lights in the window have ap-

peared less frequently, one by one we presume the inmates have gone to repose, not another gleam is visible, the last candle is extinguished, and this humble section of the great family of man is now at rest, with the veil of a dark and fearful future unlifted before them.

CHAPTER II.

During the few days that intervened between our hero's birth and his christening, Fardorougha's mind was engaged in forming some fixed principle by which to guide his heart in the conflict that still went on between avarice and affection. In this task he imagined that the father predominated over the miser almost without a struggle; whereas, the fact was, that the subtle passion, ever more ingenious than the simple one, changed its external character, and came out in the shape of affectionate forecast and provident regard for the wants and prospects of his child. This gross deception of his own heart he felt as a relief, for, though smitten with the world, it did not escape him that the birth of his little one, all its circumstances considered, ought to have caused him to feel an enjoyment unalloyed by the care and regret which checked his sympathies as a parent. Neither was conscience itself altogether silent, nor the blunt remonstrances of his servants wholly without effect. Nay, so completely was his judgment overreached, that he himself attributed this anomalous state of feeling to a virtuous effort of Christian duty, and looked upon the encroachments which a desire of saving wealth had made on his heart, as a manifest proof of much parental attachment. He consequently loved his wealth through the medium of his son, and laid it down as a fixed principle that every act of parsimony on his part was merely one of prudence, and had the love of a father and an affectionate consideration for his child's future welfare to justify it.

The first striking instance of this close and griping spirit appeared upon an occasion which seldom fails to open, in Ireland at least, all the warm and generous im

pulses of our nature. When his wife deemed it necessary to make those hospitable preparations for their child's christening which are so usual in the country, he treated her intention of complying with this old custom as a direct proof of unjustifiable folly and extravagance; nay, his remonstrance with her exhibited such remarkable good sense and prudence, that it was a matter of extreme difficulty to controvert it, or to perceive that it originated from any other motive than a strong interest in the true welfare of their child.

"Will our wastin' meat and money, an', for that matther, health and time on his christenin', aither give him more health or make us love him bether? It's not the first time, Honor, that I've heard yourself make little of some of our nabours for goin' beyant their ability in gittin' up big christenins. Don't be foolish now thin, when it comes to your own turn."

The wife took the babe up, and after having gazed affectionately on its innocent features, replied to him in a voice of tenderness and reproof,

"God knows, Fardorougha, an' if I *do* act wid folly, as you call it, in gettin' ready his christenin', surely, surely you oughtn't to blame the mother for that; little I thought, acushla oge, that your own father 'ud begrudge you as good a christenin' as is put over any other nabour's child. I'm afraid, Fardorougha, he's not as much in your heart as he ought to be."

"It's a poor proof of love for him, Honor, to put to the bad what may an' would be sarviceable to him hereafter. You only think for the present, but I can't forget that he's to be settled in the world, an' you know yourself what poor means we have of doin' that, an' that if we begin to be extravagant an' wasteful bekase God has sent him, we may beg wid him afore long."

"There's no danger of us beggin' wid him. No," she continued, the pride of the mother having been touched, "my boy will never beg—no, avourneen—you never will

—nor shame or disgrace will never come upon him aither. Have you no trust in God, Fardorougha?"

"God never helps them that neglect themselves, Honor."

"But if it was plasing to his will to remove him from us, would you ever forgive yourself not lettin' him have a christenin' like another child?" rejoined the persevering mother.

"The priest," replied the good man, "will do as much for the poor child as for the rich—there's but one saycrament for both—anything else is waste, as I said, an' I won't give in to it. You don't considher that your way of it 'ud spend as much in one day as 'ud clothe him two or three years."

"May I never sin this day, Fardorougha, but one 'ud think you're tired of him already. By not givin' in to what's dacent you know you'll only fret me—a thing that no man wid half a heart 'ud do to any woman supportin' a baby as I am—a fretted nurse makes a child sick, as Molly Moan tould you before she went, so that it's not on my own account I'm spakin', but on his—poor weeny pet—the Lord love him! Look at his innocent purty little face, an' how can you have the heart, Fardorougha? Come, avourneen, give way to me this wanst; throth if you do, you'll see how I'll nurse him, an' what a darlin' lump o' sugar I'll have him for you in no time!"

He paused a little at this delicate and affecting appeal of the mother, but except by a quick glance that passed from her to their child, it was impossible to say whether or not it made any impression on his heart, or in the slightest degree changed his resolution.

"Well, well," said he, "let me alone now; I'll think of it, I'll turn it over an' see what's best to be done; do you the same, Honor, an' maybe your own sinse will bring you to my side of the question at last."

The next day his wife renewed the subject with unabated anxiety; but, instead of expressing any change in her favour, Fardorougha declined even to enter into it at

all. An evasive reply was all she could extort from him, with an assurance that he would in a day or two communicate the resolution to which he might finally come. She perceived at once, that the case was hopeless, and after one last ineffectual attempt to bring him round, she felt herself forced to abandon it. The child, therefore, much to the mother's mortification, was baptized without a christening, unless the mere presence of the godfather and godmother, in addition to Fardorougha's own family, could be said to constitute one.

Our readers, perhaps, are not aware that a cause of deep anxiety, hitherto unnoticed by us, operated with latent power upon Fardorougha's heart. But so strong in Ireland is the beautiful superstition—if it can with truth be termed so—that children are a blessing only when received as such, that even though supported by the hardest and most shameless of all vices, avarice, Fardorougha had not nerve to avow this most unnatural source of his distress. The fact, however, was, that to a mind so constituted, the apprehension of a large family was in itself a consideration which he thought might, at a future period of their lives, reduce both him and his to starvation and death. Our readers may remember Nogher M'Cormick's rebuke to him when he heard Fardorougha allude to this; and so accessible was he *then* to the feeling, that on finding his heart at variance with it, he absolutely admitted his error, and prayed to God that he might be enabled to overcome it.

It was therefore on the day subsequent to the baptism of young Connor, for so had the child been called after his paternal grandfather, that, as a justification for his own conduct in the matter of the christening, he disclosed to his wife, with much reluctance and embarrassment, this undivulged source of his fears for the future, alleging it as a just argument for his declining to be guided by her opinion.

The indignant sympathies of the mother abashed, on this occasion, the miserable and calculating impiety of

the husband; her reproaches were open and unshrinking, and her moral sense of his conduct just and beautiful.

"Fardorougha," said she, "I thought up to this time, to this day, that there was nothing in your heart but too much of the world; but now I'm afeard, if God hasn't sed it, that the devil himself's there. You're frettin' for fraid of a family; but has God sent us any but this one yit? No; an' I wouldn't be surprised if the Almighty would punish your guilty heart by making the child he gave you a curse instead of a blessin'. I think, as it is, he has brought little pleasure to you so far, and if your heart hardens as he grows up, it's more unhappy you'll get every day you live."

"That's very fine talk, Honor; but to people in our condition, I can't see any very great blessin' in a house-ful of childre. If we're able to provide for this one, we'll have rason to be thankful without wishin' for more."

"It's my opinion, Fardorougha, you don't love the child."

"Change that opinion then, Honor; I do love the child; but there's no needcessity for blowin' it about to every one I meet. If I didn't love him, I wouldn't feel as I do about all the hardships that may be before him. Think of what a bad saison, or a failure of the crops, might bring us all to! God grant that he mayn't come to the bag and staff before he's settled in the world at all, poor thing."

"Oh, very well, Fardorougha, you may make yourself as unhappy as you like; for me, I'll put my trust in the Saviour of the world for my child. If you can trust in any one better than God, do so."

"Honor, there's no use in this talk—it'ill do nothing aither for him or us; besides, I have no more time to discoorse about it."

He then left her, but as she viewed his dark inflexible features ere he went, an oppressive sense of something not far removed from affliction weighed her down. The

child had been asleep in her arms during the foregoing dialogue, and after his father had departed she placed him in the cradle, and throwing the corner of her blue apron over her shoulder, she rocked him to sounder sleep, swaying herself, at the same, time to and fro, with that inward sorrow, of which, among the lower classes of Irish females, this motion is uniformly expressive.

It is not to be supposed, however, that, as the early graces of childhood gradually expanded (as they did) into more than ordinary beauty, the avarice of the father was not occasionally encountered in its progress by sudden gushes of love for his son. It was impossible for any parent, no matter how strongly the hideous idol of mammon might sway his heart, to look upon a creature so fair and beautiful without being frequently touched into something like affection. The fact was, that as the child advanced toward youth, the two principles we are describing nearly kept pace one with the other. That the bad and formidable passion made rapid strides, must be admitted; but that it engrossed the whole spirit of the father, is not true. The mild and gentle character of the boy, his affectionate disposition, and the extraordinary advantages of his person, could not fail sometimes to surprise his father into sudden bursts of affection. But these, when they occurred, were looked upon by Fardorougha as so many proofs that he still entertained for the boy love sufficient to justify a more intense desire of accumulating wealth for his sake. Indeed, ere the lad had numbered thirteen summers, Fardorougha's character as a miser had not only gone far abroad through the neighbourhood, but was felt by the members of his own family with almost merciless severity. From habits of honesty and a decent sense of independence, he was now degraded to rapacity and meanness; what had been prudence, by degrees degenerated into cunning; and he who, when commencing life, was looked upon only as a saving man, had now become notorious for extortion and usury.

A character such as this, among a people of generous

and lively feeling like the Irish, is in every state of life the object of intense and undisguised abhorrence. It was with difficulty he could succeed in engaging servants, either for domestic or agricultural purposes; and, perhaps, no consideration, except the general kindness which was felt for his wife and son, would have induced any person whatsoever to enter into his employment. Honor and Connor did what in them lay to make the dependants of the family experience as little of Fardorougha's griping tyranny as possible. Yet with all their kind-hearted ingenuity and secret bounty, they were scarcely able to render their situation barely tolerable.

It would be difficult to find any language, no matter what pen might wield it, capable of portraying the love which Honor O'Donovan bore to her gentle, her beautiful, and her *only* son. Ah! there, in that last epithet, lay the charm which wrapped her soul in him, and in all that related to his welfare. The moment she saw that it was not the will of God to bless them with other offspring, her heart gathered about him with a jealous tenderness, which trembled into agony at the idea of his loss.

Her love for him *then* multiplied itself into many hues, for he was in truth the prism, on which when it fell, all the varied beauty of its colours became visible. Her heart gave not forth the music of a single instrument, but breathed the concord of sweet sounds, as heard from the blended melody of many. Far different from this were the feelings of Fardorougha on finding that he was to be the first and the last vouchsafed to their union. A single regret, however, scarcely felt, touched even him, when he reflected, that if Connor were to be removed from them, their hearth must become desolate. But then came the fictitious conscience, with its nefarious calculations, to prove that, in their present circumstances, the dispensation which withheld others was a blessing to him that was given.

"Even Connor himself," argued the miser, "will be

the gainer by it, for what would my trifle of money be among so many ?"

The pleasure, however, that is derived from the violation of natural affection, is never either full or satisfactory. The gratification felt by Fardorougha upon reflecting that no farther addition was to be made to their family, resembled that which a hungry man feels who dreams he is partaking of a luxurious banquet. Avarice, it is true, like fancy, was gratified; but the enjoyment, though rich to that particular passion, left behind it a sense of emptiness, and an unconscious remorse which gnawed his heart with a slow and heavy pain, that operated like a smothered fire, wasting what it preys upon in secresy and darkness. In plainer terms, he was not happy, but so absorbed in the ruling passion—the pursuit of wealth, that he felt afraid to analyze his anxiety, or trace to its source the cause of his own misery.

In the mean time, his boy grew up the pride and ornament of the parish, idolized by his mother and beloved by all that knew him. Limited and scanty was the education which his father could be prevailed on to bestow upon him; but there was nothing that could deprive him of his natural good sense, or of the affections which his mother's love had drawn out and cultivated. One thing was remakable in him, which we mention with reluctance, as it places his father's character in a frightful point of view; it is this, that his love for that father was such as is rarely seen, even in the purest and most affectionate circles of domestic life. But let not our readers infer, either from what we have written or from anything we may write, that Fardorougha hated this lovely and delightful boy; on the contrary, earth contained not an object, except his money, which he loved *so well.* His affection for him, however, was only such as could proceed from the dregs of a defiled and perverted heart. This is not saying much, but it is saying all. What in him was parental attachment, would in another man, to such a son, be unfeeling and detestable

indifference. His heart sank on contemplating even the pittance he allowed for Connor's education; and no remonstrance could prevail on him to clothe the boy with common decency. Pocket-money was out of the question, as were all those considerate indulgences to youth, that blunt, when timely afforded, the edge of early anxiety to know those amusements of life, which, if not innocently gratified before passion gets strong, are apt to produce at a later period that giddy intoxication which has been the destruction of thousands. When Connor, however, grew up, and began to think for himself, he could not help feeling, that from a man so absolutely devoted to wealth as his father was, to receive even the slenderest proof of affection, was in this case no common manifestation of the attachment he bore him. There was still a higher and a nobler motive. He could not close his ears to the character which had gone abroad of his father; and from that principle of generosity which induces a man, even when ignorant of the quarrel, to take the weaker side, he fought his battles, until in the end he began to believe them just. But the most obvious cause of the son's attachment we have not mentioned, and it is useless to travel into vain disquisitions for that truth which may be found in the instinctive impulses of nature. He was Connor's father, and though penurious in everything that regarded even his son's common comfort, he had never uttered a harsh word to him during his life, or denied him any gratification which could be had *without* money. Nay, a kind word or a kind glance from Fardorougha, fired the son's resentment against the world which traduced him; for how could it be otherwise when the habitual defence made by him when arraigned for his penury, was anxiety to provide for the future welfare and independence of his son?

Many characters in life appear difficult to be understood, but if those who wish to analyze them only consulted human nature, instead of rushing into far-fetched theories, and traced with patience the effect which in-

terest, or habit, or inclination is apt to produce on men of a peculiar temperament, when placed in certain situations, there would be much less difficulty in avoiding those preposterous exhibitions which run into caricature, or outrage the wildest combinations that can be formed from the common elements of humanity.

CHAPTER III.

We shall beg our readers to suppose that young Connor is now twenty-two years of age, and request them, besides, to prepare for the gloom which is about to overshadow our story.

We have already stated that Fardoreugha was not only an extortioner, but a usurer. Now, as some of our readers may be surprised that a man in his station of life could practise usury, or even extortion, to any considerable extent, we feel it necessary to inform them, that there exists among Irish farmers a class of men who stand, with respect to the surrounding poor and improvident, in a position precisely analogous to that which is occupied by a Jew or money-lender among those in the higher classes who borrow and are extravagant upon a larger scale. If, for instance, a struggling small farmer have to do with a needy landlord or an unfeeling agent, who threatens to seize or eject if the rent be not paid up to the day, perhaps this small farmer is forced to borrow from one of those rustic Jews the full amount of the gale; for this he gives him at a valuation dictated by the lender's avarice and his own distress, the oats, or potatoes, or hay, which he is not able to dispose of in sufficient time to meet the demand that is upon him. This property the miser draws home, and stacks, or houses until the markets are high, when he disposes of it at a price which often secures for him a profit amounting to one third, and occasionally one half above the sum lent, upon which, in the mean time, interest is accumulating. For instance, if the accommodation be twenty pounds, property to that amount at a ruinous valuation is brought home by the accommodator. This perhaps sells for thirty, thirty-five, or forty pounds,

so that, deducting the labour of preparing it for market, there is a gain of fifty, seventy-five, or a hundred per cent., besides, probably, ten per cent. interest, which is altogether distinct from the former. This class of persons will also take a joint promissory note, or, in fact, any collateral security they know to be valid; and if the contract be not fulfilled, they immediately pounce upon the guarantee. They will, in fact, as a mark of their anxiety to assist a neighbour in distress, receive a pig from a widow, or a cow from a struggling small farmer, at thirty or forty per cent. beneath its value, and claim the merit of being a friend into the bargain. Such men are bitter enemies to paper money, especially to notes issued by branch banks, which they never take in payment. It is amusing, if a person could forget the distress which occasions the scene, to observe one of these men producing an old stocking, or a long black leathern purse, or a calf-skin pocket-book with the hair on, and counting down, as if he gave out his heart's blood drop by drop, the specific sum, uttering at the same time a most lugubrious history of his own poverty, and assuring the poor wretch he is fleecing, that if he (the miser) gives way to his good nature, he must ultimately become the victim of his own benevolence. In no case, however, do they ever put more in the purse or stocking than is just then wanted, and sometimes they will pretend to be short a guinea or ten shillings, which they borrow from a neighbour, or remit to the unfortunate dupe in the course of the day. This they do in order to enhance the obligation, and give a distinct proof of their poverty. Let not, therefore, the gentlemen of the Minories, nor our P——s and our M——s nearer home, imagine for a moment that they engross the spirit of rapacity and extortion to themselves. To the credit of the class, however, to which they belong, such persons are not so numerous as formerly, and to the still greater honour of the peasantry be it said, the devil himself is not hated with half the detestation which is borne them. In order that the reader may understand

our motive for introducing such a description as that we have now given, it will be necessary for us to request him to accompany a stout, well-set young man, named Bartle Flanagan, along a green ditch, which, planted with osiers, leads to a small meadow belonging to Fardorougha Donovan. In this meadow his son Connor is now making hay, and on seeing Flanagan approach, he rests upon the top of his rake, and exclaims in a soliloquy:

"God help you and yours, Bartle; if it was in *my* power, I take God to witness, I'd make up wid a willin' heart for all the hardship and misfortune my father brought upon you all."

He then resumed his labour, in order that the meeting between him and Bartle might take place with less embarrassment, for he saw at once that the former was about to speak to him.

"Isn't the weather too hot, Connor, to work bareheaded? I think you ought to keep on your hat."

"Bartle, how are you? off or on, it's the same thing; hat or no hat, it's broilin' weather, the Lord be 'praised; what news, Bartle?"

"Not much, Connor, but what you know—a family that was strugglin' but honest, brought to dissolation. We're broken up; my father and mother's both livin' in a cabin they took from Billy Nulty; Mary and Alick's gone to sarvice, an' myself's just on my way to hire wid the last man I ought to go to—your father; that is, supposin' we can agree."

"As heaven's above me, Bartle, there's not a man in the country this day sorrier for what has happened than myself. But the truth is, that when my father heard of Ton Grehan, that was your security, havin' gone to America, he thought every day a month till the note was due. My mother an' I did all we could, but you know his temper; 'twas no use. God knows, as I said before, I'm heart sorry for it."

"Every one knows, Connor, that if your mother an'

you had your way an' will, your father wouldn't be sich a screw as he is."

"In the mean time, don't forget that he *is* my father, Bartle, an', above all things, remember that I'll allow no man to speak disparagingly of him in my presence."

"I believe you'll allow, Connor, that he was a scourge an' a curse to us, an' that none of us ought to like a bone in his skin."

"It couldn't be expected you would, Bartle; but you must grant, after all, that he was only recoverin' his own. Still, when you know what my feeling is upon the business, I don't think it's generous in you to bring it up between us."

"I could bear his harashin' us out of house an' home," proceeded the other, "only for one thought that still crasses in an me."

"What is that, Bartle? God knows I can't help feelin' for you," he added, smote with the desolation which his father had brought upon the family.

"He lent us forty pounds," proceeded the young man; "and when he found that Tom Grehan, our security, went to America, he came down upon us the minute the note was due, canted all we had at half price, and turned us to starve upon the world; now, I could bear that, but there is one thing—"

"That's twice you spoke about that one thing," said Connor, somewhat sharply, for he felt hurt at the obstinacy of the other in continuing a subject so distressing to him; "but," he continued, in a milder tone, "tell me, Bartle, for goodness' sake, what it is, an' let us put an' end to the discoorse. I'm sure it must be unpleasant to both of us."

"It doesn't signify," replied the young man, in a desponding voice; "*she's* gone; it's all over wid me *there;* I'm a beggar—I'm a beggar."

"Bartle," said Connor, taking his hand, "you're too much down-hearted; come to us, but first go to my father;

I know you'll find it hard to deal with him. Never mind that, whatever he offers you, close with him, an' take my word for it that my mother and I between us will make you up dacent wages; an' sorry I am that it's come to this with you, poor fellow."

Bartle's cheek grew pale as ashes; he wrung Connor's hand with all his force, and fixed an unshrinking eye on him as he replied,

"Thank you, Connor, *now*—but I hope I'll live to thank you better *yet*, and if I do, you needn't thank me for any return I may make you or yours. I will close wid your father, an' take whatsomever he'll offer me; for, Connor," and he wrung his hand again, "Connor O'Donovan, I haven't a house or home this day, or a place under God's canopy where to lay my head, except upon the damp floor of my father's naked cabin. Think of that, Connor, an' think if I can forget it; still," he added, "you'll see, Connor—Connor, *you'll see how I'll forgive it.*"

"It's a credit to yourself to spake as you do," replied Connor: "call this way after seein' my father, an' let me know what's done; an' I hope, Bartle, you an' I will have some pleasant days together."

"Ay, an' pleasant nights too, I hope," replied the other; "to be sure I'll call; but if you take my advice, you'd tie a hankerchy about your head: it's mad hot, an' enough to give one a faver, bareheaded."

Having made this last observation, he leaped across a small drain that bounded the meadow, and proceeded up the fields to Fardorougha's house.

Bartle Flanagan was a young man about five feet six in height, but of a remarkably compact and athletic form. His complexion was dark, but his countenance open, and his features well set and regular. Indeed, his whole aspect might be termed bland and prepossessing. If he ever appeared to disadvantage, it was while under the influence of resentment, during which his face became pale as death, nay, almost livid, and, as his brows were strong

and black, the contrast between them and his complexion changed the whole expression of his countenance into that of a person whose enmity a prudent man would avoid. He was not quarrelsome, however, or subject to any impetuous bursts of passion; his resentments, if he retained any, were either dead or silent, or, at all events, so well regulated that his acquaintances looked upon him as a young fellow of a good-humoured and friendly disposition. It is true, a hint had gone abroad that on one or two occasions he was found deficient in courage; but as the circumstances referred to were rather unimportant, his conduct by many was attributed rather to good sense and a disinclination to quarrel on frivolous grounds, than to positive cowardice. Such he was, and such he is, now that he has entered upon the humble drama of our story.

On arriving at Fardorougha's house, he found that worthy man at dinner, upon potatoes and a cold bone of bacon. He had only a few minutes before returned from the residence of the county treasurer, with whom he went to lodge, among other sums, that which was so iniquitously wrung from the ruin of the Flanagans. It would be wrong to say that he felt in any degree embarrassed on looking into the face of one whom he had so oppressively injured. The recovery of his usurious debts, no matter how merciless the process, he considered only as an act of strict justice to himself, for his conscience having long ago outgrown the perception of his own inhumanity, now only felt compunction when death or the occasional insolvency of a security defeated his rapacity.

When Bartle entered, Fardorougha and he surveyed each other with perfect coolness for nearly half a minute, during which time neither uttered a word. The silence was first broken by Honor, who put forward a chair, and asked Flanagan to sit down.

"Sit down, Bartle," said she, "sit down, boy; an' how is all the family?"

"'Deed, can't complain," replied Bartle, "as times

goes; an' how are you, Fardorougha? although I needn't ax, you're takin' care of number *one*, any how, what you always did."

"I'm middlin', Bartle, middlin'; as well as a man can be that has his heart broke every day in the year, strivin' to come by his own, an' can't do it; but I'm a fool, an' ever was—sarvin' others an' ruinin' myself."

"Bartle," said Mrs. Donovan, "are you unwell, dear? you look as pale as death. Let me get you a drink of fresh milk."

"If he's weak," said Fardorougha, "an' he looks weak, a drink of fresh wather 'ud be betther for him; ever an' always a drink of wather for a weak man, or a weak woman aither; it recovers them sooner."

"Thank you kindly, Mrs. Donovan, an' I'm oblaged to you, Fardorougha, for the wather; but I'm not a bit weak; it's only the heat o' the day ails me—for sure enough it's broilin' weather."

"'Deed it is," replied Honor, "killin' weather to them that has to be out undher it."

"If it's good for nothin' else, it's good for the haymakin'," observed Fardorougha.

"I'm tould, Misther Donovan," said Bartle, "that you want a sarvint man; now, if you do, I want a place, an' you see I'm comin' to you to look for one."

"Heaven above, Bartle," exclaimed Honor, "what do you mane? is it one of Dan Flanagan's sons goin' to sarvice?"

"Not one, but all o' them," replied the other, coolly, "an' his daughters too, Mrs. Donovan; but it's all the way o' the world. If Misther Donovan 'ill hire me, I'll thank him."

"Don't be *mistherin'* me, Bartle; misther them that has manes an' substance," returned Donovan.

"Oh God forgive you, Fardorougha," exclaimed his honest and humane wife; "God forgive you! Bartle, from my heart, from the core o' my heart I pity you, my poor boy. An' is it to this, Fardorougha, you've brought them? Oh Saviour o' the world!"

She fixed her eyes upon the victim of her husband's extortion, and in an instant they were filled with tears.

"What did I do," said the latter, "but strive to recover my own? How could I afford to lose forty pounds? An' I was tould for sartin that your father knew Grehan was goin' to Ameriky when he got him to go security. Whisht, Honor, you're as foolish a woman as riz this day; haven't you your sins to cry for?"

"God knows I have, Fardorougha, an' more than my own to cry for."

"I dar say you did hear as much," said Bartle, quietly replying to the observation of Fardorougha respecting his father; "but you know it's a folly to talk about spilt milk. If you want a sarvint I'll hire; for, as I said a while agone, *I* want a place, an' except wid you I don't know where to get one."

"If you come to me," observed the other, "you must go to your duty, an' obsarve the *fast* days, but not the holydays."

"Sarvints isn't oblaged to obsarve the fast days," replied Bartle.

"But I always put it in the bargain," returned the other.

"As to that," said Bartle, "I don't much mind it. Sure it'll be for the good o' my sowl, any way. But, what wages will you be givin'?"

"Thirty shillins every half year; that's three pounds—sixty shillins a year. A great deal of money. I'm sure I dunna where it's to come from."

"It's very little for a year's hard labour," replied Bartle; "but little as it is, Fardorougha, owin' to what has happened betwixt us, believe me—an' you *may* believe me—I'm right glad to take it."

"Well, but, Bartle, you know there's fifteen shillins of the ould account still due, an' you must allow it out o' your wages; if you don't, it's no bargain."

Bartle's face became livid; but he was perfectly cool; indeed, so much so that he smiled at this last condition

of Fardorougha. It was a smile, however, so ghastly, dark, and frightful, that, by any person capable of tracing the secret workings of some deadly passion on the countenance, its purport could not have been mistaken.

"God knows, Fardorougha, you might let *that* pass; considher that you've been hard enough upon us."

"God knows I say the same," observed Honor. "Is it the last drop o' the heart's blood you want to squeeze out, Fardorougha?"

"The last drop! What is it but my right? Am I robbin' him? Isn't it due? Will he, or can he deny *that?* An' if its due, isn't it but honest in him to pay it? They're not livin' can say *I* ever defrauded them of a penny. I never broke a bargain, an' yet you open on me, Honor, as if I was a rogue! If I hadn't that boy below to provide for, an' settle in the world, what 'ud I care about money? It's for *his* sake I look afther my right."

"I'll allow the money," said Bartle. "Fardorougha's right; it's due, an' I'll pay him; ay will I, Fardorougha, settle wid you to the last farden, or beyant it, if you like."

"I wouldn't take a farden beyant it in the shape of debt. Them that's decent enough to make a present, may, for that's a horse of another colour."

"When will I come home?" inquired Bartle.

"You may stay at home, now that you're here," said the other. "An' in the mane time, go an' help Connor to put that hay in lap-cocks. Anything you want to bring here you can bring afther your day's work to-night."

"Did you ate your dinner, Bartle," said Honor; "bekase if you didn't I'll get you something."

"It's not to this time o'day he'd be without his dinner, I suppose," observed his new master.

"You're very right, Fardorougha," rejoined Bartle; "I'm thankful to you ma'am, I did ate my dinner."

"Well, you'll get a rake in the barn, Bartle," said his master; "an' now tramp down to Connor, an' I'll see

how you'll handle yourselves, both o' you, from this till night."

Bartle accordingly proceeded toward the meadow, and Fardorougha, as was his custom, throwing his great coat closely about his shoulders, the arms dangling on each side of him, proceeded to another part of his farm.

Flanagan's step, on his way to join Connor, was slow and meditative. The kindness of the son and mother touched him; for the line between their disposition and Fardorougha's was too strong and clear to allow the slightest suspicion of their participation in the spirit which regulated his life. The father, however, had just declared that his anxiety to accumulate money arose from a wish to settle his son independently in life; and Flanagan was too slightly acquainted with human character to see through this flimsy apology for extortion. He took it for granted that Fardorougha spoke truth, and his resolution received a bias from the impression, which, however, his better nature determined to subdue. In this uncertain state of mind he turned about almost instinctively, to look in the direction which Fardorougha had taken, and as he observed his diminutive figure creeping along, with his great coat about him, he felt that the very sight of the man, who had broken up their hearth and scattered them on the world, filled his heart with a deep and deadly animosity that occasioned him to pause as a person would do who finds himself unexpectedly upon the brink of a precipice.

Connor, on seeing him enter the meadow with the rake, knew at once that the terms had been concluded between them; and the excellent young man's heart was deeply moved at the destitution which moved Flanagan to seek for service with the very individual who had occasioned it.

"I see, Bartle," said he, "you have agreed."

"We have," replied Bartle. "But if there had been any other place to be got in the parish (an', indeed, only for the state I'm in), I wouldn't have hired my-

self to him for nothing, or for next to nothing, as I have done."

"Why, what did he promise?"

"Three pounds a year, an' out o' that I'm to pay him fifteen shillins that my father owes him still."

"Close enough, Bartle, but don't be cast down; I'll undertake that my mother an' I will double it; an' as for the fifteen shillins, I'll pay them out o' my own pocket —when I get money. I needn't tell you that we're all kept upon the tight crib, and that little cash goes far with us; for all that, we'll do what I promise, go as it may."

"It's more than I ought to expect, Connor; but yourself and your mother, all the counthry would put their hands under both your feets."

"I would give a great dale, Bartle, that my poor father had a little of the feelin' that's in my mother's heart; but it's his way, Bartle, an' you know he's my father, an' has been kinder to me than to any livin' creature on this earth. I never got a harsh word from him yet. An' if he kept me stinted in many things that I was entitled to as well as other persons like me, still, Bartle, he loves me, an' I can't but feel great affection for him, love the money as he may."

This was spoken with much seriousness of manner not unmingled with somewhat of regret, if not of sorrow. Bartle fixed his eye upon the fine face of his companion, with a look in which there was a character of compassion. His countenance, however, while he gazed on him, maintained its natural colour—it was not pale.

"I am sorry, Connor," said he, slowly, "I am sorry that I hired wid your father."

"An' I'm glad of it," replied the other; "why should you be sorry?"

Bartle made no answer for some time, but looked into the ground, as if he had not heard him.

"Why should you be sorry, Bartle?"

Nearly a minute elapsed before his abstraction was broken. "What's that?" said he at length: "what were you askin' me?"

"You said you were sorry."

"Oh, ay!" returned the other, interrupting him; "but I didn't mind what I was sayin': 'twas thinkin' o' somethin' else I was—of home, Bartle, an' what we're brought to; but the best way's to dhrop all discoorse about that for ever."

"You'll be my friend if you do," said Connor.

"I will, then," replied Bartle: "we'll change it. Connor, were you ever in love?"

O'Donovan turned quickly about, and, with a keen glance at Bartle, replied,

"Why, I don't know: I believe I might once or so."

"*I am*," said Flanagan, bitterly; "*I am*, Connor."

"An' who's the happy crature, will you tell us?"

"No," returned the other; "but if there's a wish that I'd make against my worst enemy, 'twould be, that he might love a girl above his manes; or if he was her aquil, or even near her aquil, that he might be brought—" he paused, but immediately proceeded, "Well, no matter; I am, indeed, Connor."

"An' is the girl fond o' you?"

"I don't know; my mind was made up to tell her; but it's past that now; I know she's wealthy and proud both, and so is all her family."

"How do you know she's proud when you never put the subject to her?"

"I'm not sayin' she's proud in one sinse; wid respect to herself, I believe she's humble enough; I mane, she doesn't give herself many airs, but her people's as proud as the very sarra, an' never match below them; still, if I'd opportunities of being often in her company, I'd not fear to trust to a sweet tongue for comin' round her."

"Never despair, Bartle," said Connor; "you know the old proverb, 'a faint heart;' however, settin' the purty crature aside, whoever she is, I think if we divided ourselves—you to that side, and me to this—we'd get this hay lapped in half the time; or do you take which side you plase."

"It's a bargain," said Bartle; "I don't care a trawneen: I'll stay where I am, thin, an' do you go beyant: let us hurry, too, for, if I'm not mistaken, it's too sultry to be long without rain; the sky, too, is gettin' dark."

"I obsarved as much myself," said Connor; "an' that was what made me spake."

Both then continued their labour with redoubled energy, nor ceased for a moment until the task was executed, and the business of the day concluded.

Flanagan's observation was indeed correct, as to the change in the day and the appearance of the sky. From the hour of five o'clock the darkness gradually deepened, until a dead black shadow, fearfully still and solemn, wrapped the whole horizon. The sun had altogether disappeared, and nothing was visible in the sky but one unbroken mass of darkness, unrelieved even by a single pile of clouds. The animals, where they could, had betaken themselves to shelter; the fowls of the air sought the covert of the hedges, and ceased their songs; the larks fled from the mid heaven; and occasionally might be seen a straggling bee hurrying homeward, careless of the flowers which tempted him in his path, and only anxious to reach his hive before the deluge should overtake him. The stillness indeed was awful, as was the gloomy veil which darkened the face of nature, and filled the mind with that ominous terror which presses upon the heart like consciousness of guilt. In such a time, and under the aspect of a sky so much resembling the pall of death, there is neither mirth nor laughter, but that individuality of apprehension, which, while it throws the conscience in upon its own records, and suspends conversation, yet draws man to his fellows, as if mere contiguity were a safeguard against danger.

The conversation between the two young men, as they returned from their labour, was short but expressive.

"Bartle," said Connor, "are you afeard of thundher? The rason I ax," he added, "is, becase your face is as white as a sheet."

"I have it from my mother," replied Flanagan; "but, at all evints, such an evenin', as this is enough to make the heart of any man quake."

"I feel my spirits low, by rason of the darkness, but I'm not afraid. It's well for them that have a clear conscience: they say, that a stormy sky is the face of an angry God—"

"An' the thundher his voice," added Bartle: "but why are the brute bastes an' the birds afraid, that commit no sin?"

"That's thrue," said his companion; "it must be natural to be afraid, or why would *they* indeed? but some people are naturally more timersome than others."

"I intinded to go home for my other clo'es an' linen this evenin'," observed Bartle, "but I won't go out to-night."

"I must, thin," said Connor; "an', with the blessin' o' God, will too, come what may."

"Why, what is there to bring you out, if it's a fair question to ax?" inquired the other.

"A promise, for one thing; an' my own inclination—my own heart, that's nearer the truth—for another. It's the first meetin' I an' her I'm goin' to ever had."

"*Thighum, Thighum*, I undherstand," said Flanagan; "well, I'll stay at home; but, sure it's no harm to wish you success—an' that, Connor, is more than *I'll* ever have where I wish for it most."

This closed their dialogue, and both entered Fardorougha's house in silence.

Up until twilight the darkness of the dull and heavy sky was unbroken; but toward the west there was seen a streak whose colour could not be determined as that of blood or fire. By its angry look, it seemed as if the sky in that quarter were about to burst forth in one awful sweep of conflagration. Connor observed it, and very correctly anticipated the nature and consequence of its appearance; but what will not youthful love dare and overcome? With an undismayed heart he set forward on

his journey, which we leave him to pursue, and beg permission, meanwhile, to transport the reader to a scene distant about two miles farther toward the inland part of the country.

CHAPTER IV.

THE dwelling of Bodagh Buie O'Brien, to which Connor now directed his steps, was a favourable specimen of that better class of farmhouses inhabited by our more extensive and wealthy agriculturists. It was a large, whitewashed, ornamentally thatched building, that told by its external aspect of the good living, extensive comfort, and substantial opulence which prevailed within. Stretched before its hall-door was a small lawn, bounded on the left by a wall that separated it from the farmyard into which the kitchen door opened. Here were stacks of hay, oats, and wheat, all upon an immense scale, both as to size and number; together with thrashing and winnowing machines, improved ploughs, carts, cars, and all the other modern implements of an extensive farm. Very cheering, indeed, was the din of industry that arose from the clank of machinery, the grunting of hogs, the cackling of geese, the quacking of ducks, and all the various other sounds which proceeded from what at first sight might have appeared to be rather a scene of confusion, but which, on closer inspection, would be found a rough yet well-regulated system, in which every person had an allotted duty to perform.

Here might Bodagh Buie be seen, dressed in a gray broadcloth coat, drab kerseymere breeches, and lamb's wool stockings, moving from place to place with that calm, sedate, and contented air which betokens an easy mind, and a consciousness of possessing a more than ordinary share of property and influence. With hands thrust into his smallclothes pockets, and a bunch of gold seals suspended from his fob, he issued his orders in a grave

and quiet tone, differing very little in his dress from an absolute *Squireen*, save in the fact of his Caroline hat being rather scuffed, and his strong shoes begrimed with the soil of his fields or farmyard. Mrs. O'Brien was, out of the sphere of her own family, a person of much greater pretension than the Bodagh her husband; and, though in a different manner, not less so in the discharge of her duty as a wife, a mother, or a mistress. In appearance, she was a large, fat, good-looking woman, eternally in a state of motion and bustle; and as her education had been extremely scanty, her tone and manner, though brimful of authority and consequence, were strongly marked with that ludicrous vulgarity which is produced by the attempt of an ignorant person to accomplish a high style of gentility. She was a kind-hearted, charitable woman, however; but so inveterately conscious of her station in life, that it became in her opinion a matter of duty to exhibit a refinement and elevation of language suitable to a matron who could drive every Sunday to mass on her own jaunting-car. When dressed on these occasions in her rich rustling silks, she had, what is called in Ireland, a comfortable *flaghoola* look, but at the same time a carriage so stiff and rustic, as utterly overcame all her attempts, dictated as they were by the simplest vanity, at enacting the arduous and awful character of a *Squireen's* wife.

Their family consisted of a son and daughter. The former, a young man of a very amiable disposition, was, at the present period of our story, a student in Maynooth College; and the latter, now in her nineteenth year, a promising pupil in a certain seminary for young ladies, conducted by that notorious Master of Arts, Little Cupid. Oona, or Una O'Brien, was, in truth, a most fascinating and beautiful *brunette*; tall in stature, light and agile in all her motions, cheerful and sweet in temper, but with just as much of that winning caprice as was necessary to give zest and piquancy to her whole character. Though tall and slender, her person was by no means thin; on

the contrary, her limbs and figure were very gracefully rounded, and gave promise of that agreeable fulness beneath or beyond which no perfect model of female proportion can exist. If our readers could get one glance at the hue of her rich cheek, or fall for a moment under the power of her black mellow eye, or behold the beauty of her white teeth, while her face beamed with a profusion of dimples, or saw her while in the act of shaking out her *invincible locks*, ere she bound them up with her white and delicate hands—then indeed might they understand why no war of the elements could prevent Connor O'Donovan from risking life and limb sooner than disappoint her in the promise of this their *first* meeting.

Oh, that first meeting of pure and youthful love! with what a glory is it ever encircled in the memory of the human heart? No matter how long or how melancholy the lapse of time since its past existence may be, still, still is it remembered by our feelings when the recollection of every tie but itself has departed.

The charm, however, that murmured its many-toned music through the soul of Una O'Brien was not, upon the evening in question, wholly free from a shade of melancholy for which she could not account; and this impression did not result from any previous examination of her love for Connor O'Donovan, though many such she had. She knew that in this, the utmost opposition from both her parents must be expected; nor was it the consequence of a consciousness on her part that, in promising him a clandestine meeting, she had taken a step which could not be justified. Of this, too, she had been aware before; but, until the hour of appointment drew near, the heaviness which pressed her down was such as caused her to admit that the sensation, however painful and gloomy, was new to her, and bore a character distinct from anything that could proceed from the various lights in which she had previously considered her attachment. This was, however, heightened by the boding aspect of the heavens and the dread repose of the evening,

so unlike anything she had ever beheld before. Notwithstanding all this, she was sustained by the eager and impatient buoyancy of first affection; which, when her imagination pictured the handsome form of her young and manly lover, predominated for the time over every reflection and feeling that was opposed to itself. Her mind indeed resembled a fair autumn landscape, over which the cloud shadows may be seen sweeping for a moment, while again the sun comes out and turns all into serenity and light.

The place appointed for their interview was a small paddock, shaded by alders, behind her father's garden, and thither, with trembling limbs and a palpitating heart, did the young and graceful daughter of Bodagh Buie proceed.

For a considerable time, that is to say, for three long years before this delicious appointment, had Connor O'Donovan and Una been wrapped in the Elysium of mutual love. At mass, at fair, and at market, had they often and often met, and as frequently did their eyes search each other out, and reveal in long blushing glances the state of their respective hearts. Many a time did he seek an opportunity to disclose what he felt, and as often with confusion, and fear, and delight, did she afford him what he sought. Thus did one opportunity after another pass away, and as often did he form the towering resolution to reveal his affection if he were ever to be favoured with another. Still would some disheartening reflection, arising from the uncommon gentleness and extreme modesty of his character, throw a damp upon his spirits; he questioned his own penetration; perhaps she was in the habit of glancing as much at others as she glanced at him. Could it be possible that the beautiful daughter of Bodagh Buie—he the wealthiest man, and his wife the proudest woman, within a large circle of the country—would love the son of Fardorougha Donavan, whose name had, alas, become so odious and unpopular? But then the blushing face, the dark lucid

eyes, and the long earnest glance rose before his imagination, and told him that, let the difference in the character and station of their parents be what it might, the fair dark daughter of O'Brien was not insensible to him, nor to the anxieties he felt.

The circumstances which produced the first conversation they ever had, arose from an incident of a very striking and singular character. About a week before the evening in question, one of Bodagh Buie's beehives swarmed, and the young colony, though closely watched and pursued, directed their course to Fardorougha's house, and settled in the mouth of the chimney. Connor having got a clean sheet, secured them, and was about to commit them to the care of Bodagh's servants, when it was suggested that the duty of bringing them home devolved on himself, inasmuch as he was told they would not remain, unless placed in a new hive by the hands of the person on whose property they had settled. While on his way to the Bodagh's he was accosted in the following words by one of O'Brien's servants:

"Connor, there's good luck before you, or the bees wouldn't pick *you* out among all the rest o' the neighbours; you ought to hould up your head, man, who knows what manin's in it?"*

"Why, do *you* b'lieve that bees settlin' wid one is a sign o' good luck?"

"Surely I do; doesn't every one know it to be thrue? Connor, you're a good-lookin' fellow, an' I need scarcely tell you that we have a purty girl at home; can you lay that and that together? Arrah, be my sowl, the richest honey ever the same bees 'ill make, is nothin' but alloways,† compared wid that purty mouth of her own! A honey-comb is a fool to it."

* The settling of bees upon any house is, in Ireland, considered to be an omen of good fortune.

† Aloes.

"Why, did you ever thry, Mike?"

"Is it me? Och, och, if I was only high enough in this world, maybe I wouldn't be spakin' sweet to her; no, no, be my word! thry indeed for the likes o' me! Faith, but I know a sartin young man that she does be often spakin' about."

Connor's heart was in a state of instant commotion.

"An' who—who is *he*—who is that sartin young man, Mike?"

"Faith, the son o' one that can run a shillin' farther than e'er another man in the county. Do you happen to be acquaint wid one Connor O'Donovan of Lisnamona?"

"Connor O'Donovan—that's good, Mike—in the mane time don't be goin' it on us. No, no; an' even if she did, it isn't to *you* she'd spake about any one, Michael ahagur?"

"No, nor it wasn't to me—sure I didn't say it was—but don't you know my sisther's at sarvice in the Bodagh's family? Divil a word o' falsity I'm tellin' you; so if you haven't the heart to spake for yourself, I wouldn't give knots o' straws for you; and now, there's no harm done, I hope—moreover, an' by the same token you needn't go to the throuble o' puttin' up an advertisement to let the parish know what I've tould you."

"Hut, tut, Mike, it's all folly. Una Dhun O'Brien to think o' *me!* nonsense, man; that cock would never fight."

"Very well; divil a morsel of us is forcin' you to believe it. I suppose the mother o' you has your *wooden spoon* to the fore still. I'd kiss the bravery* you didn't come into the world wid a *silver ladle* in your mouth, anyhow. In the mane time, we're at the Bodagh's—so have an eye about you afther what you've heard—*Nabocklish!*"

This, indeed, was important intelligence to Connor,

* Breviary.

and it is probable that, had he not heard it, another opportunity of disclosing his passion might have been lost.

Independently of this, however, he was not proof against the popular superstition of the bees, particularly as it appeared to be an augury to which his enamoured heart could cling with all the hope of young and passionate enthusiasm.

Nor was it long till he had an opportunity of perceiving that she whose image had floated in light before his fancy, gave decided manifestations of being struck by the same significant occurrence. On entering the garden, the first person his eye rested on was Una herself, who, as some of the other hives were expected to swarm, had been engaged watching them during the day. His appearance at any time would have created a tumult in her bosom, but in addition to this, when she heard that the bees which rested on Connor's house had swarmed from *her own hive*, to use the words of Burns,

> "She looked—she reddened like the rose,
> Syne pale as ony lily;"

and with a shy but expressive glance at Connor, said, in a low hurried voice, "These belong *to me*."

Until the moment we are describing, Connor and she, notwithstanding that they had frequently met in public places, had never yet spoken; nor could the words now uttered by Una be considered as addressed to him, although, from the glance that accompanied them, it was sufficiently evident that they were designed for him alone. It was in vain that he attempted to accost her; his confusion, his pleasure, his timidity, seemed to unite in rendering him incapable of speaking at all. His lips moved several times, but the thoughts, as they arose, died away unspoken.

At this moment, Mike, with waggish good humour, and in a most laudable fit of industry, reminded the other

servants who had been assisting to secure the bees, that as they (the bees) were now safe, no farther necessity existed for their presence.

"Come, boys—death-alive, the day's passin'—only think, Miss Una, that we have all the hay in the Long-shot meadow to get into cocks yet, an' here we're idlin' an' gostherin' away our time like I dunna what. They're schamin', Miss Una—divil a thing else, an' what'll the masther say if the same meadow's not finished to-night?"

"Indeed, Mike," replied Una, "if the meadow *is* to be finished this night, there's little time to be lost."

"Come, boys," exclaimed Mike, "you hear what Miss Una says; if its to be finished to-night there's little time to be lost—turn out—march. Miss Una can watch the bees without our help. Good evenin', Misther Donovan; be my word, but you're entitled to a taste o' *honey* any way, for bringin' back Miss Una's bees to her."

Mike, after having uttered his significant opinion relative to his sense of justice, drove his fellow-servants out of the garden, and left the lovers together. There was now a dead silence, during a greater part of which neither dared to look at the other; at length each hazarded a glance, their eyes met, and their embarrassment deepened in a tenfold degree. Una, on withdrawing her gaze, looked with an air of perplexity from one object to another, and at length, with downcast lids, and glowing cheeks, her eyes became fixed on her own white and delicate finger.

"Who would think," said she with a voice tremulous with agitation, "that the sting of a bee could be so painful?"

Connor advanced toward her with a beating heart. "Where have you been stung, Miss O'Brien?" said he, in a tone shaken out of its fulness by what he felt.

"In the finger," she replied, and she looked closely into the spot as she uttered the words.

"Will you let me see it?" asked Connor.

She held her hand toward him without knowing what she did, nor was it till after a strong effort that Connor mastered himself so far as to ask her in which finger she felt the pain. In fact, both saw at once that their minds were engaged upon far different thoughts, and that their anxiety to pour out the full confession of their love was equally deep and mutual.

As Connor put the foregoing question to her he took her hand in his.

"In what finger!" she replied, "I don't—indeed—I—I believe in the—the—but what—what is this?—I am very—very weak."

"Let me support you to the summer-house, where you can sit," returned Connor, still clasping her soft, delicate hand in his; then circling her slender waist with the other, he helped her to a seat under the thick shade of the osiers.

Una's countenance immediately became pale as death, and her whole frame trembled excessively.

"You are too weak even to sit without support," said Connor; "your head is droppin'. For God's sake, lean it over on me. Oh, I'd give ten thousand lives to have it on my breast only for one moment."

Her paleness still continued; she gazed on him, and as he gently squeezed her hand, a slight pressure was given in return. He then drew her head over upon his shoulder, where it rather fell than leaned; a gush of tears came from her eyes, and the next moment, with sobbing hearts, they were encircled in each other's arms.

From this first intoxicating draught of youthful love they were started by the voice of Mrs. O'Brien calling upon her daughter, and at the same time, to their utter dismay, they observed the portly dame sailing, in her usual state, down toward the arbour, with an immense bunch of keys dangling from her side.

"Oonagh, miss—Miss Oonagh—where are you, miss, ma colleen? Here's a litther," she proceeded, when

Una appeared, "from Mrs. Fogarty, your schoolmis-thress, to yer fadher, statin' that she wants you to finish your Jiggraphy at the dancin', wid a new dancin'-tacher from *Dubling*. Why—eah! what ails you, miss, ma colleen? What the dickens wor you cryin' for?".

"These nasty bees that stung me," returned the girl; "oh, for goodness sake, mother, dear, don't come any farther, except you wish to have a whole hive upon you!"

"Why, sure, they wouldn't sting any one that won't meddle wid them," replied the mother, in a kind of alarm.

"The sorra pin they care, mother; don't come near them; I'll be in, by an' by: where's my father?"

"He's in the house, an' wants you to answer Mrs. Fogarty, statin' fedher you'll take a month's larnin' on the *flure** or not."

"Well, I'll see her letter in a minute or two, but you may tell my father he needn't wait; I won't answer it to-night, at all events."

"You must answer it on the nail," replied her mother, "becase the messager's waitin' in the kitching 'ithin."

"That alters the case altogether," returned Una, "and I'll follow you immediately."

The good woman then withdrew, having once more enjoined the daughter to avoid delay, and not detain the messenger.

"You must go instantly," said she to Connor; "oh, what would happen me if they knew that I lov—that I—" a short pause ensued, and she blushed deeply.

"Say what you were goin' to say," returned Connor; "oh, say *that one word*, and all the misfortunes that ever happened to man can't make me unhappy! Oh God! an' is it possible! Say that word—oh! say it—say it!"

"Well, then," she continued, "if they knew that *I love* the son of Fardorougha Donovan, what would become of me? Now go, for fear my father may come out."

* Dancing.

"But when will I see you again?"

"Go," said she, anxiously; "go, you can easily see me."

"But when? when? say on Thursday."

"Not so soon, not so soon," and she cast an anxious eye toward the garden-gate.

"When then? say this day week."

"Very well—but go—maybe my father has heard from the servants that you are here."

"Dusk is the best time."

"Yes—yes—about dusk; under the alders, in the little green field behind the garden."

"Show me the wounded finger," said he, with a smile, "before I go."

"There," said she, extending her hand; "but, for Heaven's sake, go."

"I'll tell you how to cure it," said he, tenderly; "honey is the medicine; put that sweet finger to your own sweeter lip, and, afterward, *I'll* carry home the wound."

"But not the medicine *now*," said she, and snatching her hand from his, with light, fearful steps, she fled up the garden and disappeared.

Such, gentle reader, were the circumstances which brought our young and artless lovers together, in the black twilight of the singularly awful and ominous evening which we have already described.

Connor, on reaching the appointed spot, sat down; but his impatience soon overcame him; and while hurrying to and fro under the alders, he asked himself in what this wild but rapturous attachment was to terminate. That the proud *Bodagh Buie*,* and his prouder wife, would never suffer their beautiful daughter, the heiress of all their wealth, to marry the son of Fardorougha the miser, was an axiom, the truth of which pressed upon his heart with a deadly weight. On the other hand,

* Bodagh Buie—literally, the Yellow Churl.

would his father, or rather could he, change his nature so far as to establish him in life, provided Una and he were united without the consent of her parents. Alas! he knew his father's parsimony too well; and, on either hand, he was met by difficulties that appeared to him to be insurmountable. But, again, came the delightful and ecstatic consciousness that, let their parents act as they might, Una's heart and his were bound to each other by ties, which, only to think of, was rapture. In the midst of these reflections, he heard her light foot approach, but with a step more slow and melancholy than he could have expected from the ardour of their love.

When she approached, the twilight was just sufficient to enable him to perceive that her face was pale, and tinged apparently with melancholy, if not with sorrow. After the first salutations were over, he was proceeding to inquire into the cause of her depression, when, to his utter surprise, she placed her hands upon her face, and burst into a fit of grief.

Those who have loved need not be told that the most delightful office of that delightful passion is to dry the tears of the beloved one who is dear to us beyond all things else that life contains. Connor literally performed this office, and inquired, in a tone so soothing and full of sympathy, why she wept, that her tears for a while only flowed the faster. At length her grief abated, and she was able to reply to him,

"You ask me why I am crying," said the fair young creature; "but, indeed, I cannot tell you. There has been a sinking of the heart upon me during the greater part of this day. When I thought of our meeting I was delighted, but again some heaviness would come over me that I can't account for."

"I know what it is," replied Connor, "a very simple thing; merely the terrible calm and blackness of the evenin'. I was sunk myself a little."

"I ought to cry for a better reason," she returned,

"in meeting you I have done, an' am doing, what I ought to be sorry for; that is a wrong action that my conscience condemns."

"There is nobody perfect, my dear Una," said Connor; "an' none without their failin's; they have little to answer for that have no more than you.''

"Don't flatter me," she replied; "if you love me as you say, never flatter me while you live; *I* will always speak what I feel, and I hope *you'll* do the same."

"If I could spake what I feel," said he, "you would still say I flattered you; it's not in the power of any words that ever were spoken to tell how I love you; how much my heart an' soul's fixed upon you. Little you know, my own dear Una, how unhappy I am this minute, to see you in low spirits; what do you think is the occasion of it? Spake now, as you say you will do, that is, as you feel."

"Except it be that *my heart* brought me to meet you to-night contrary to *my conscience*, I do not know; Connor, Connor, that heart is so strongly in your favour, that if *you* were not to be happy, neither could its poor owner."

Connor for a moment looked into the future, but like the face of the sky above him, all was either dark or stormy; his heart sank, but the tenderness expressed in Una's last words filled his whole soul with a vehement and burning passion, which he felt must regulate his destiny in life, whether for good or evil. He pulled her to his breast, on which he placed her head; she looked up fondly to him, and perceiving that he wrought under some deep and powerful struggle, said, in a low confiding voice, while the tears once more ran quietly down her cheeks,

"Connor, what I said is true."

"My heart's burnin', my heart's burnin'," he exclaimed; "it's not love I feel for you, Una—it's more than love; oh, what is it? Una, Una, this I know, that I cannot long live without you or from you; if I did, I'd go wild or mad through the world. For the last three

years you have never been out of my mind, I may say, awake or asleep; for I believe a night never passed during that time that I didn't drame of you—of the beautiful young crature; oh! God in heaven, can it be thrue that she loves me at last? Say them blessed words again, Una; oh say them again; but I am too happy; I can hardly bear this delight."

"It is true that I love you; and if our parents could think as we do, Connor, how easy would it be for them to make us happy, but—"

"It's too soon, Una; it's too soon to spake of that. Happy? don't we love one another? Isn't that happiness? who or what can deprive us of that? We are happy without them; we can be happy in spite of them; oh, my own fair girl; sweet life of my life, and heart of my heart; heaven—heaven itself would be no heaven to me, if you weren't with me!"

"Don't say that, Connor dear; it's wrong; let us not forget what is due to religion, if we expect our love to prosper. You may think this strange from me that has acted contrary to religion in coming to meet you against the will and knowledge of her parents; but beyond that, dear Connor, I hope I will never go. But is it true, that you've loved me so long?"

"It is," said he, "the second Sunday in May next was three years, I knelt opposite you at mass. You were on the left-hand side of the althar, I was on the right; my eyes were never off you; indeed, you may remember it."

"I have a good right," said she, blushing and hiding her face on his shoulder. "I ought to be ashamed to acknowledge it, and me so young at the time; little more than sixteen. From that day to this, my story has been just your own. Connor, can you tell me how I found it out, but I *knew* you loved me."

"Many a thing was to tell you that, Una dear; sure my eyes were never off you, whenever you wor near me, an' wherever you were, there was I certain to be

too. I never missed any public place if I thought you would be at it, an' that merely for the sake of seein' you; an' now will you tell me why it was I could 'a sworn *you* loved *me?*"

"You have answered for us both," she replied; "as for me, if I only chanced to hear your name mentioned, my heart would beat; if the talk was about you I could listen to nothing else, and I often felt the colour come and go on my cheek."

"Una, I never thought I could be born to such happiness. Now that I know you love me, I can hardly think it was love I felt for you all along; it's wonderful—it's wonderful."

"What is so wonderful?" she inquired.

"Why, the change that I feel since knowin' that you love me; since I had it from *your own lips*, it has overcome me—I'm a child—I'm anything, anything you choose to make me—it was never love—it's only since I found you loved me that my heart's burnin' as it is."

"I'll make you happy if I can," she replied, "and keep you so, I hope."

"There's one thing that will make me still happier than I am," said Connor.

"What is it? if it's proper and right I'll do it."

"Promise me that, if I live, you'll never marry any one else than me."

"You wish, then, to have the promise all on one side," she replied with a smile and a blush, each as sweet as ever captivated a human heart.

"No, no, no, my darling Una, *acushla, gra gal machree*, no; I'll promise the same to you."

She paused, and a silence of nearly a minute ensued.

"I don't know that it's right, Connor; I have taken one wrong step as it is, but, much as I love you, I won't take another; whatever I do I must feel that it's proper. I'm not sure that this is."

"Don't you say you love me, Una?"

"I do; you know I do."

"I have only another question to ask; could you, or would you, love me as you do, an' marry another?"

"I could not, Connor, and would not, and will not. I *am* ready to promise; I may easily do it; for God knows the very thought of marrying another, or being deprived of you, is more than I can bear."

"Well, then," returned her lover, seizing her hand, "I take God to witness that, while you are alive an' faithful to me, I will never marry any woman but yourself. Now," he continued, "put your right hand into mine, and say the same words."

She did so, and was in the act of repeating the form, "I take God to witness," when a vivid flash of lightning shot from the darkness above them, and a peal of thunder almost immediately followed with an explosion so loud as nearly to stun both. Una started with terror, and instinctively withdrew her hand from Connor's.

"God preserve us," she exclaimed, "that's awful. Connor, I feel as if the act I am goin' to do is not right. Let us put it off, at all events, till another time."

"Is it because there comes an accidental brattle of thunder?" he returned. "Why the thunder would come if we were never to change a promise. You have mine now, Una dear, an' I'm sure you wouldn't wish me to be bound an' yourself free. Don't be afraid, darling; give me your hand, an' don't tremble so; repeat the words at wanst, and let it be over."

He again took her hand, when she repeated the form in a distinct, though feeble voice, observing when it was concluded,

"Now, Connor, I did this to satisfy you, but I still feel like one who has done a wrong action. I am yours now, but I can't help praying to God that it may end happily for us both."

"It must, darling Una, it must end happily for us both. How can it be otherwise? For my part, except to see you my wife, I couldn't be happier than I am this minute; exceptin' *that*, my heart has all it wished for. Is it pos-

sible! Oh! is it possible that this is not a dream, my heart's life; but if it is—if it is—I never more will wish to waken."

Her young lover was deeply affected as he uttered these words, nor was Una proof against the emotion they produced.

"I could pray to God this moment with a purer heart than I ever had before," he proceeded, "for makin' my lot in life so happy. I feel that I am better and freer from sin than I ever was yet. If we're faithful and true to one another, what can the world do to us?"

"I couldn't be otherwise than faithful to you," she replied, "without being unhappy myself, and I trust it's no sin to love each other as we do. Now let us—God bless me, what a flash; an' here's the rain beginning. That thunder's dreadful; Heaven preserve us! It's an' awful night! Connor, you must see me as far as the corner of the garden; as for you, I wish you were safe at home."

"Hasten, dear," said he, "hasten; it's no night for you to be out in, now that the rain's coming; as for me, if it was ten times as dreadful, I won't feel it. There's but one thought—one thought in my mind, and that I wouldn't part with for the wealth of the universe."

Both then proceeded at a quick pace until they reached the corner of the Bodagh's garden, where, with short but earnest reassurances of unalterable attachment, they took a tender and affectionate farewell.

CHAPTER V.

It is not often that the higher ranks can appreciate the moral beauty of love as it is experienced by those humbler classes to whom they deny the power of feeling it in its most refined and exalted character. For our parts, we differ so much from them in this, that if we wanted to give an illustration of that passion in its purest and most delicate state, we would not seek for it in the saloon or the drawing-room, but among the green fields and the smiling landscapes of rural life. The simplicity of humble hearts is more accordant with the unity of affection than any mind can be that is distracted by the competition of rival claims upon its gratification. We do not say that the votaries of rank and fashion are insensible to love; because how much soever they may be conversant with the artificial and unreal, still they are human, and must, to a certain extent, be influenced by a principle that acts wherever it can find a heart on which to operate. We say, however, that their love, when contrasted with that which is felt by the humble peasantry, is languid and sickly; neither so pure, nor so simple, nor so intense. Its associations in high life are unfavourable to the growth of a healthy passion; for what is the glare of a lamp, a twirl through the insipid mazes of the ball-room, or the unnatural distortions of the theatre, when compared to the rising of the summer sun, the singing of birds, the music of the streams, the joyous aspect of the varied landscape, the mountain, the valley, the lake, and a thousand other objects, each of which transmits to the peasant's heart, silently and imperceptibly, that subtile power which at once strengthens and purifies the passion? There is

scarcely such a thing as solitude in the upper ranks, or an opportunity of keeping the feelings unwasted, and the energies of the heart unspent by the many vanities and petty pleasures with which fashion forces a compliance, until the mind falls from its natural dignity into a habit of coldness and aversion to everything but the circle of empty trifles in which it moves so giddily. But the enamoured youth who can retire to the beautiful solitude of the still glen to brood over the image of her he loves, and who, probably, sits under the very tree where his love was avowed and returned; he, we say, exalted with the fulness of his happiness, feels his heart go abroad in gladness upon the delightful objects that surround him, for everything he looks upon is as a friend; his happy heart expands over the whole landscape; his eye glances to the sky; he thinks of the Almighty Being above him, and though without any capacity to analyze his own feelings, love—the love of some humble, plain, but modest girl—kindles by degrees into the sanctity and rapture of religion.

Let not our readers of rank, then, if any such may honour our pages with a perusal, be at all surprised at the expression of Connor O'Donovan when, under the ecstatic power of a love so pure and artless as that which bound his heart and Una's together, he exclaimed as he did, "*Oh, I could pray to God this moment with a purer heart than I ever had before.*" Such a state of feeling among the people is neither rare nor anomalous, for, however the great ones and the wise ones of the world may be startled at our assertion, we beg to assure them that love and religion are more nearly related to each other than those who have never felt either in its truth and purity can imagine.

As Connor performed his journey home, the thunder-tempest pealed fearfully through the sky; and though the darkness was deep and unbroken by anything but the red flashes of lightning, yet so strongly absorbed was

his heart by the scene we have just related, that he arrived at his father's house scarcely conscious of the roar of elements which surrounded him.

The family had retired to bed when he entered, with the exception of his parents, who, having felt uneasy at his disappearance, were anxiously awaiting his return, and entering into fruitless conjectures concerning the cause of an absence so unusual.

"What," said the alarmed mother, "what in the world wide could keep him so long out, and on sich a tempest as is in it? God protect my boy from all harm and danger this fearful night! Oh, Fardorougha, what 'ud become of us if anything happened *him?* As for me, my heart's wrapped up in him; widout our darlin' it 'ud break—break—Fardorougha."

"Hut, he's gone to some neighbour's, and can't come out till the storm is over; he'll soon be here now, that the tundher and lightnin's past."

"But did you never think, Fardorougha, what 'ud become of you, what you'd do, or how you'd live, if anything happened him? which the Almighty forbid this night and for ever! Could you live widout him?"

The old man gazed upon her like one who felt displeasure at having a contingency so painful forced upon his consideration. Without making any reply, however, he looked thoughtfully into the fire for some time, after which he rose up, and with a querulous and impatient voice, said,

"What's the use of thinkin' about sich things? Lose him! why would I lose him? I couldn't lose him; I'd as soon lose my own life; I'd rather be dead at wanst than lose him."

"God knows your love for him is a quare love, Fardorougha," rejoined the wife; "you wouldn't give him a guinea if it 'ud save his life, or allow him even a few shillins now and then for pocket money, that he might be aquil to other young boys like him."

"No use, no use in that, except to bring him into drink

an' other bad habits; a poor way, Honor, of showin' one's love to him. If you had your will, you'd spoil him; I'm keepin' whatsomever little shillins we've scraped together to settle him dacently in life; but, indeed, that's time enough yet; he's too young to marry for some years to come, barrin' he got a fortune."

"Well, one thing, Fardorougha—if ever two people wor blessed in a good son, praised be God, we are that."

"We, are Honor, we are; there's not his aquil in the parish—achora machree, that he is. When I'm gone he'll know what I've done for him."

"Whin you're gone? why Saver of airth, sure you wouldn't keep him out of his—husth!—here he is; God be thankied, poor boy, he's safe! Oh, thin, *vich no Hoiah*, Connor jewel, were you out undher this terrible night?"

"Connor, avich machree," added the father, "you're lost. My hand to you, if he's worth three hapuns; sthrip an' throw my cothamore about you, an' draw into the fire; you're fairly lost."

"I'm worth two lost people yet," said Connor, smiling; "mother, did you ever see a pleasanter night?"

"Pleasant, Connor, darlin'; oh thin it's you may say so, I'm sure!"

"Father, you're a worthy, only your cothamore's too scimpit for me. Faith, mother, although you think I'm jokin', the devil a one o' me is; a pleasanter night, a happier night I never spent. Father, you ought to be proud o' me, an' stretch out a bit with the cash; faith, I'm nothin' else than a fine handsome young fellow."

"Be my sowl, an' he ought to be proud out of you, Connor, whether you're in airnest or not," observed the mother, "an' to stretch out wid the *arhighad** too if you want it."

"Folly on, Connor, folly on; your mother 'ill back you, I'll go bail, say what you will; but sure you know all I have must be yours yet, acushla,"

* Money.

Connor now sat down, and his mother stirred up the fire, on which she placed additional fuel. After a little time his manner changed, and a shade of deep gloom fell upon his manly and handsome features, "I don't know," he at length proceeded, "that as we three are here together, I could do betther than ask your advice upon what has happened to me to-night."

"Why, what has happened you, Connor?" said the mother, alarmed; "plase God, no harm, I hope."

"Who else," added the father, "would you be guided by, if not by your mother an' myself?"

"No harm, dear mother," said Connor, in reply to her; "harm! oh! mother, mother, if you knew it; an' as for what *you* say, father, it's right; what advice but my mother's an' yours ought I ask?"

"An' God's too," added the mother.

"An' my heart was never more *ris* to God than it was, an' is this night," replied their ingenuous boy.

"Well, but what has happened, Connor?" said his father; "if it's anything where our advice can sarve you, of coorse we'll advise you for the best."

Connor, then, with a glowing heart, made them acquainted with the affection which subsisted between himself and Una O'Brien, and ended by informing them of the vow of marriage which they had that night solemnly pledged to each other.

"You both know her by sight," he added, "an' afther what I've sed, can you blame me for sayin' that I found this a pleasant an' a happy night?"

The affectionate mother's eyes filled with tears of pride and delight on hearing that her handsome son was loved by the beautiful daughter of Bodagh Buie, and she could not help exclaiming, in the enthusiasm of the moment,

"She's a purty girl, the purtiest, indeed, I ever laid my two livin' eyes upon, and by all accounts as good as she's purty; but I say that, face to face, you're as good, agra, ay, an' as handsome, Fardorougha, as she is. God bless

her, any way, an' mark her to grace and happiness, *mo colleen dhas dhun* "*

"He's no match for her," said the father, who had listened with an earnest face and compressed lips to his son's narrative; "he's no match for her, by two hundre guineas."

Honor, when he uttered the previous part of his observation, looked upon him with a flash of indignant astonishment; but when he had concluded, her countenance fell back into its original expression. It was evident that while she, with the feelings of a woman and a mother, instituted a parallel between their personal merits alone, the husband viewed their attachment through that calculating spirit which had regulated his whole life.

"You're thinkin' of her money now," she added; "but remimber, Fardorougha, that it wasn't born wid her. An' I hope, Connor, it's not for her money that you have any *grah*† for her?"

"You may swear that, mother; I love her little finger betther than all the money in the king's bank."

"Connor, avich, your mother has made a fool of you, or you wouldn't spake the nonsense you spoke this minute."

"My word to you, father, I'll take all the money I'll get; but what am I to do? Bodagh Buie an' his wife will never consent to allow her to marry me, I can tell you; an' if she marries me without their consent, you both know I have no way of supportin' her, except you, father, assist me."

"That wouldn't be needful, Connor; you may manage them; they won't see her want; she's an *only* daughter; they *couldn't* see her want."

"An' isn't he an *only* son, Fardorougha?" exclaimed the wife; "an' my sowl to happiness but I believe you'd see *him* want."

* My beautiful brown girl.
† Love.

"Any way," replied her husband, "I'm not for matches aginst the consint of paarents; they're not lucky; or can't you run away wid her, an' then refuse marryin' her except they come down with the cash."

"Oh, Father," exclaimed Connor, "father, father, to become a villain!"

"Connor," said his mother, rising up in a spirit of calm and mournful solemnity, "never heed; go to bed, achora, go to bed."

"Of coorse I'll never heed, mother," he replied; "but I can't help sayin' that, happy as I was a while agone, my father is sendin' me to bed with a heavy heart. When I asked your advice, father, little I thought it would be to do—but no matter! I'll never be guilty of an act that 'ud disgrace my name."

"No, avillish," said his mother, "you never will; God knows it's as much an' more than you an' other people can do to keep the name we have in dacency."

"It's fine talk," observed Fardorougha, "but what I advise has been done by hundreds that wor married an' happy afterward; how-an-iver, you needn't get into a passion, either of you; I'm not pressin' you, Connor, to it."

"Connor, achree," said his mother, "go to bed, an' instead of the advice you got, ax God's; go, avillish!"

Connor, without making any farther observation, sought his sleeping-room, where, having recommended himself to God in earnest prayer, he lay revolving all that had occurred that night, until the gentle influence of sleep at length drew him into oblivion.

"Now," said his mother to Fardorougha, when Connor had gone, "you must sleep by yourself; for as for me, my side I'll not stretch on the same bed wid you to-night."

"Very well, I can't help that," said her husband; "all I can say is this, that I'm not able to put sinse or prudence into you or Connor; so, since you won't be guided by me, take your own coorse. Bodagh Buie's very well

able to provide for them; an' if he won't do so *before* they marry, why let Connor have nothin' to say to her."

"I'll tell you what, Fardorougha, God wouldn't be in heaven, or you'll get a cut heart yet, either through your son or your money; an' that it may not be through my darlin' boy, oh, grant, sweet Saver o' the airth, this night! I'm goin' to sleep wid Biddy Nulty, an' you'll find a clane nightcap on the rail o' the bed; an', Fardorougha, afore you put it an, kneel down and pray to God to change your heart, for it wants it—it wants it."

In Ireland, as in other countries, the first object of a servant-man, after entering the employment of his master, is to put himself upon an amicable footing with his fellow-servants of the other sex. Such a step, besides being natural in itself, is often taken in consequence of the *esprit de corps* which prevails among persons in that class. Bartle Flanagan, although he could not be said to act from any habit previously acquired in service, went to work with all the tact and adroitness of a veteran. The next morning, after having left the barn where he slept, he contrived to throw himself in the way of Biddy Nulty, a girl, who, though vain and simple, was at the same time conscientious and honest. On passing from the barn to the kitchen, he noticed her returning from the well with a pitcher of water in each hand; and as it is considered an act of civil attention for the male servant, if not otherwise employed, to assist the female in small matters of the kind, so did Flanagan in his best manner and kindest voice bid her good-morrow, and offer to carry home the pitchers.

"It's the least I may do," said he, "now that I'm your fellow-servant: but, before you go farther, lay down your burden, an' let us chat a while."

"Indeed," replied Biddy, "it's little we expected ever to see your father's son goin' to earn his bread undher another man's roof."

"Pooh! Biddy! there's greater wondhers in the world than that, woman alive! But tell me—pooh—ay, is there

a thousand quarer things—but I say, Biddy, how do you like to live wid this family ?"

"Why, troth indeed, only for the withered ould *leprechaun* himself, divil a dacenter people ever broke bread."

"Yet, isn't it a wondher that the ould fellow is what he is, sich an oppressin' ould miser, an' he so full o' money ?"

"Troth, there's one thing myself wondhers afmore than *that*."

"What, Biddy ? let us hear it."

"Why that *you* could be mane an' shabby enough to come as a servant to ate the bread of the man that ruined yez ?

"Biddy," replied Flanagan, "I'm glad you've said it; but do you think I've so bad a heart as to keep revinge in against an inimy ? How could I go to my knees at night, if I—no, Biddy, we must be Christians. Well ! let us drop that; so you tell me the mother an' son are kind to you."

"As good-hearted a pair as ever lived."

"Connor, of course, can't but be *very* kind to so good-looking a girl as you are, Biddy," said Bartle, with a knowing smile.

"Very kind ! good-looking ! ay, indeed, I'm sure o' that ! Bartle, behave, an' don't be gettin' an wid any o' your palavers. What 'ud make Connor be kind to the likes o' me, that way ?"

"I don't see why he oughtn't an' mightn't ; you're as good as him, if it goes to that."

"Oh yis, indeed !"

"Why, you know you're handsome."

"Handsome," replied the vain girl, tightening her apron strings, and assuming a sly coquettish look ; "Bartle, go an' mind your business, and let me bring home my pitchers ; it's time the breakwist was down. Sich nonsense !"

"Very well, you're not, thin : you've a bad leg, a bad

figure, an' a bad face, and it would be a terrible thing all out for Connor O'Donovan to fall in consate wid you."

"Well, about Connor I could tell you something; me! tut! go to the sarra; faix, you don't know them that Connor's afther, nor the collogin' they all had about it no longer ago than last night itself. I suppose they thought I was asleep, but it was like the hares, wid my eyes open."

"An' it's a pity, Biddy, ever the same two eyes should be shut. Begad, myself's beginnin' to feel quare somehow, when I look at them."

A glance of pretended incredulity was given in return, after which she proceeded,

"Bartle, don't be bringin' yourself to the fair wid sich folly. My eyes is jist as God made them; but I can tell you that, before a month o' Sundays passes, I wouldn't be surprised if you see Connor married to—you wouldn't guess?"

"Not I; the divil a hap'orth I know about who he's coortin'."

"No less than our great beauty, Bodagh Buie's daughter, Oona O'Brien. Now, Bartle, for goodness' sake, don't let this crass your lips to livin' mortal. Sure I heard him tellin' all to the father and mother last night; they're promised to one another. Eh! blessed saints, Bartle, what ails you? you're as white as a sheet. What's wrong? and what did you start for?"

"Nothin'," replied Flanagan, coolly, "bnt a stitch in my side. I'm subject to that; it pains me very much while it lasts, and laves my face, as you say, the colour of dimity; but about Connor, upon my throth, I'm main proud to hear it; she's a purty girl, an', besides, he'll have a fortune that'll make a man of him; I am, in throth, heart proud to hear it. It's a pity Connor's father isn't as dacent as himself. Arrah, Biddy, where does the ould codger keep his money?"

"Little of it in the house, any way; sure, whenever he

scrapes a guinea together he's away wid it to the county —county—och, that county man that keeps the money for the people."

"The treashurer; well, much good may his thrash do him, Biddy, that's the worst I wish him. Come, now, and I'll lave your pitchers at home, and remember, you owe me something for this."

"Good will, I hope."

"*That* for one thing," he replied, as they went along; "but we'll talk more about it when we have time; and I'll thin tell you the truth about what brought me to hire wid Fardorougha Donovan."

Having thus excited that most active principle called female curiosity, both entered the kitchen, where they found Connor and his mother in close and apparently confidential conversation, Fardorougha himself having, as usual, been abroad upon his farm for upward of an hour before any of them had risen.

The feelings with which they met that morning at breakfast may be easily understood by our readers, without much assistance of ours. On the part of Fardorougha there was a narrow, selfish sense of exultation, if not of triumph, at the chance that lay before his son of being able to settle himself independently in life, without the necessity of making any demand upon the hundreds which lay so safely in the keeping of the county treasurer. His sordid soul was too deeply imbued with the love of money to perceive that what he had hitherto looked upon as a proof of parental affection and foresight, was nothing more than a fallacy by which he was led day after day farther into his prevailing vice. In other words, now that love for his son, and the hope of seeing him occupy a respectable station in society, ought to have justified the reasoning by which he had suffered himself to be guided, it was apparent that the prudence which he had still considered to be his duty as a kind parent, was nothing else than a mask for his own avarice. The idea, therefore, of seeing

Connor settled without any aid from himself, filled his whole soul with a wild hard satisfaction, which gave him as much delight as perhaps he was capable of enjoying. The advice offered to his son on the preceding night appeared to him a matter so reasonable in itself, and the opportunity offered by Una's attachment so well adapted for making it an instrument to work upon the affections of her parents, that he could not for the life of him perceive why they should entertain any rational objection against it.

The warm-hearted mother participated so largely in all that affected the happiness of her son, that if we allow for the difference of sex and position, we might describe their feelings as bearing, in the character of their simple and vivid enjoyment, a very remarkable resemblance. This amiable woman's affection for Connor was reflected upon Una O'Brien, whom she now most tenderly loved, not because the fair girl was beautiful, but because she had plighted her troth to that son who had been during his whole life her own solace and delight.

No sooner was the morning meal concluded, and the servants engaged at their respective employments, than Honor, acting probably under Connor's suggestion, resolved at once to ascertain whether her husband could so far overcome his parsimony as to establish their son and Una in life; that is, in the event of Una's parents opposing their marriage, and declining to render them any assistance. With this object in view, she told him, as he was throwing his great-coat over his shoulders, in order to proceed to the fields, that she wished to speak with him upon a matter of deep importance.

"What is it?" said Fardorougha, with a hesitating shrug, "what is it? This is ever an' always the way when you want *money;* but I tell you I have no money. You wor born to waste and extravagance, Honor, and there's no curin' you. What is it you want? an' let me go about my business."

"Throw that ould threadbare cothamore off o' you," replied Honor, "and beg of God to give you grace to sit down, an' have common feeling an' common sense."

"If it's money to get cloes either for yourself or Connor, there's no use in it. I needn't sit; you don't want a stitch either of you."

Honor, without more ado, seized the coat, and flinging it aside, pushed him over to a seat on which she forced him to sit down.

"As heaven's above me," she exclaimed, "I dunna what'll come over you at all at all. Your money, your thrash, your dirt an' filth, ever, ever, an' for ever more in your thought, heart, and sowl. Oh Chierna! to think of it, an' you know there's a God above you, an' that you must meet him, an' that *widout* your money too!"

"Ay, ay, the money's what you want to come at; but I'll not sit here to be hecthor'd. What is it, I say agin, you want?"

"Fardorougha ahagur," continued the wife, checking herself, and addressing him in a kind and affectionate voice, "maybe I *was* spakin' too harsh to you, but sure it was an' is for your own good. How an' ever, I'll thry kindness, and if you have a heart at all, you can't but show it when you hear what I'm goin' to say."

"Well, well, go an," replied the pertinacious husband; "but—money—ay, ay, is there. I feel, by-the-way, you're comin' about me, that there is money at the bottom of it."

The wife raised her hands and eyes to heaven, shook her head, and after a slight pause, in which she appeared to consider her appeal a hopeless one, she at length went on in an earnest but subdued and desponding spirit,

"Fardorougha, the time's now come that will show the world whether you love Connor or not."

"I don't care a pin about the world; you an' Connor know well enough that I love him."

"Love for one doesn't come out merely in words,

Fardorougha; actin' for their benefit shows it bethher than spakin'. Don't you grant that?"

"Very well, maybe I do, and agin maybe I don't; there's times when the one's bethher than the other; but go an; maybe I do grant it."

"Now tell me where in this parish, ay, or in the next five parishes to it, you'd find sich a boy for a father or mother to be proud out of, as Connor, your own darlin', as you often called him?"

"Devil a one, Honor; *damnho* to the one; I won't differ wid you in *that*."

"You won't differ wid me? the devil thank you for that. You won't, indeed! but *could* you, I say, if you wor willin'?"

"I tell you I could *not*."

"Now there's sinse an' kindness in that. Very well, you say you're gatherin' up all the money you can *for him*."

"For him—*him*," exclaimed the unconscious miser, "why, what do you mane—for—well—ay—yes, yes, I did say for him; it's for *him* I'm keeping it—it *is*, I tell you."

"Now, Fardorougha, you know he's ould enough to be settled in life on his own account, an' you *heard* last night the girl he can get, if you stand to him, as he ought to expect from a father that loves him."

"Why, last night, thin, didn't I give my—"

"Whisht, ahagur! hould your tongue a while, and let me go on. Truth's best: he dotes on that girl to sich a degree, that if he doesn't get her, he'll never see another happy day while he's alive."

"All *feasthalagh*,* Honor, that won't pass wid me; I know otherwise myself. Do you think that if I hadn't got *you*, I'd been unhappy four an' twenty hours, let alone my whole life? I tell you that's *feasthalagh*, an' won't pass. He wouldn't ate an ounce the less if he was never to

* Nonsense.

get her. You seen the breakfast he made this mornin'; I didn't begrudge it to *him*, but may I never stir if that Flanagan wouldn't ate a horse behind the saddle; he has a stomach that 'ud require a king's ransom to keep it."

"You know nothing of what I'm spakin' about," replied his wife. "*I* wasn't *Una dhas dhun* O'Brien in my best days; an' be the vestment,* you warn't Connor, that has more feelin', an' spirit, an' generosity in the nail of his little finger, than ever you had in your whole carkass. I tell you if he doesn't get married to that girl he'll break his heart. Now how can he marry her except you take a good farm for him, and stock it dacently, so that he may have a home, sich as she desarves, to bring her to?"

"How do you know but they'll give her a fortune when they find her bent on him?"

"Why, it's not unpossible," said the wife, immediately changing her tactics, "it's not unpossible, but I can tell you it's very unlikely."

"The best way, then, in my opinion, 'ud be to spake to Connor about breaking it to the family."

"Why, that's fair enough," said the wife; "I wondher myself I didn't think of it, but the time was so short since last night."

"It is short," replied the miser, "far an' away too short to expect any one to make up their mind about it. Let them not be rash themselves aither, for I tell you that when people marry in haste, they're apt to have time enough to repint at laysure."

"Well, but, Fardorougha acushla, now hear me; throth it's thruth and sinse what you say; but still, avourneen, listen; now in case that the Bodagh an' his wife don't consint to their marriage, or to do anything for them, won't you take them a farm and stock it bravely? Think of poor Connor, the darlin' fine fellow that he is. Oh, thin, but it's he 'ud go to the well o' the world's end to

* The robes in which the priest celebrates mass.

aise you, if your little finger only ached. He would, or for myself, and yet his own father to trate him wid sich—"

It was in vain she attempted to proceed; the subject was one in which her heart felt too deep an interest to be discussed without tears. A brief silence ensued, during which Fardorougha moved uneasily on his seat, took the tongs and mechanically mended the fire, and peering at his wife a countenance twitched as if by *tic doloreux*, stared round the house with a kind of stupid wonder, rose up, then sat instantly down, and in fact exhibited many of those unintelligible and uncouth movements which, in persons of his cast, may be properly termed the hieroglyphics of human action, under feelings that cannot be deciphered either by those on whom they operate, or by those who behold them.

"Yes," said he, "Connor is all you say, an' more, an' more—an'—an'—a rash act is the worst thing he could do. It's betther, Honor, to spake to him, as I sed, about lettin' the matther be known to Una's family out of hand."

"And, thin, if they refuse, you can show them a ginerous example, by puttin' them into a dacent farm. Will you promise me that, Fardorougha? If you do, all's right, for they're not livin' that ever knew you to break your word or your promise."

"I'll make no promise, Honor; I'll make no promise; but let the other plan be tried first. Now don't be pressin' me; he is—he is a noble boy, and would, as you say, thravel round the earth to keep my little finger from pain; but let me alone about it now—let me alone about it."

This, though slight encouragement, was still in Honor's opinion quite as much as, if not more than, she expected. Without pressing him, therefore, too strongly at that moment, she contented herself with a full-length portrait of their son, drawn with all the skill of a mother who knew, if her husband's heart could be touched at all, those points on which she stood the greatest chance of finding it accessible.

For a few days after this the subject of Connor's love was permitted to lie undebated, in the earnest hope that Fardorougha's heart might have caught some slight spark of natural affection from the conversation which had taken place between him and Honor. They waited consequently with patience for some manifestation on his part of a better feeling, and flattered themselves that his silence proceeded from the struggle which they knew a man of his disposition must necessarily feel in working up his mind to any act requiring him to part with that which he loved better than life. The ardent temperament of Connor, however, could ill brook the pulseless indifference of the old man; with much difficulty, therefore, was he induced to wait a whole week for the issue, though sustained by the mother's assurance, that in consequence of the impression left on her by their last conversation, she was certain the father, if not urged beyond his wish, would declare himself willing to provide for them. A week, however, elapsed, and Fardorougha moved on in the same hard and insensible spirit which was usual to him, wholly engrossed by money, and never either directly or indirectly appearing to remember that the happiness and welfare of his son were at stake, or depending upon the determination to which he might come.

Another half week passed, during which Connor had made two unsuccessful attempts to see Una, in order that some fixed plan of intercourse might be established between them, at least until his father's ultimate resolution on the subject proposed to him should be known. He now felt deeply distressed, and regretted that the ardour of his attachment had so far borne him away during their last meeting, that he had forgotten to concert measures with Una for their future interviews.

He had often watched about her father's premises from a little before twilight until the whole family had gone to bed, yet without any chance either of conversing with her, or of letting her know that he was in the neighbour-

hood. He had gone to chapel, too, with the hope of seeing her, or snatching a hasty opportunity of exchanging a word or two, if possible, but, to his astonishment, she was absent from mass—an omission of duty of which she had not been guilty for the last three years. What, therefore, was to be done? For him to be detected lurking about the Bodagh's house might create suspicion, especially after their interview in the garden, which very probably had, through the officiousness of the servants, been communicated to her parents. In a matter of such difficulty he bethought him of a confidant, and the person to whom the necessity of the case directed him was Bartle Flanagan. Bartle, indeed, ever since he entered into his father's service, had gained rapidly upon Connor's good-will, and on one or two occasions wellnigh succeeded in drawing from him a history of the mutual attachment which subsisted between him and Una. His good humour, easy language, and apparent friendship for young O'Donovan, together with his natural readiness of address, or, if you will, of manner, all marked him out as admirably qualified to act as a confidant in a matter which required the very tact and talent he possessed.

"Poor fellow," thought Connor to himself, "it will make him feel more like one of the family than a servant. If he can think that he's trated as my friend and companion, he may forget that he's ating the bread of the very man that drove him an' his to destruction. Ay, an' if we're married, I'm not sure but I'll have him to give me away too."

This resolution of permitting Flanagan to share his confidence had been come to by Connor upon the day subsequent to that on which he had last tried to see Una. After his return home, the disappointment on one hand, and his anxiety concerning his father's liberality on the other, together with the delight arising from the certainty of being beloved, all kept his mind in a tumult, and permitted him to sleep but little. The next day he decided on admitting Bartle to his confidence, and reposing this

solemn trust in his integrity. He was lying on his back in the meadow—for they had been ricking the hay from the lapcocks, when that delicious langour which arises from the three greatest provocatives to slumber, want of rest, fatigue, and heat, so utterly overcame him, that, forgetting his love, and all the anxiety arising from it, he fell into a dreamless and profound sleep.

From this state he was aroused after about an hour by the pressure of something sharp and painful against his side, near the region of the heart, and on looking up he discovered Bartle Flanagan standing over him with a pitchfork in his hand, one end of which was pressed against his breast, as if he had been in the act of driving it forward into his body. His face was pale, his dark brows frightfully contracted, and his teeth apparently set together as if working under some fearful determination. When Connor awoke, Flanagan broke out into a laugh that no language could describe. The character of mirth which he wished to throw into his face, jarred so terrifically with its demoniacal expression when first seen by Connor, that, even unsuspecting as the latter was, he started up with alarm, and asked Flanagan what was the matter. Flanagan, however, laughed on—peal after peal succeeded—he tossed the pitchfork aside, and clasping both his hands on his face, continued the paroxsyms until he recovered his composure.

"Oh," said he, "I'm sick, I'm as wake as a child wid laughin'; but, Lord bless us, after all, Connor, what is a man's life worth whin he has an enemy near him. There was I, ticklin' you wid the pitchfork, strivin' to waken you, and one inch of it would have baked your bread for life. Didn't you feel me, Connor?"

"Divil a bit, till the minute afore I ris."

"Then the divil a purtier jig ever you danced in your life; wait till I show you how your left foot went."

He accordingly lay down and illustrated the pretended action, after which he burst out into another uncontrollable fit of mirth.

"'Twas just for all the world," said he, "as if I had tied a string to your toe, for you groaned an' grunted, an' went on like I dunna what; but, Connor, what makes you so sleepy to-day as well as on Monday last?"

"That's the very thing," replied the unsuspicious and candid young man, "that I wanted to spake to you about."

"What! about sleepin' in the meadows?"

"Divil a bit o' that, Bartle, not a morsal of sleepin' in the meadows is consarned in what I'm goin' to mintion to you. Bartle, didn't you tell me, the day you hired with my father, that you wor in love?"

"I did, Connor, I did."

"Well, so am I; but do you know who I'm in love with?"

"How the divil, man, could I?"

"Well, no swearin', Bartle; keep the commandments, my boy. I'll tell you in the mane time, an' that's more than you did to me, you close-mouth-is-a-sign-of-a-wise-head spalpeen."

"Hard fortune to you, go an, and don't be keepin' me in suspinse—who's the girl?"

"Did you ever hear tell of one *Colleen dhas dhun*, as she's called, known by the name of Una or Oona O'Brien, daughter to one Bodagh Buie O'Brien, the richest man, barrin' a born gintleman, in the three parishes."

"All very fair, Connor, for you or any one else to be in love wid her; ay, or man alive, for myself, if it goes to that; but, *but*, Connor, avouchal, are you sure that ever you'll bring her to be in love wid you?"

"Bartle," said Connor, seriously, and after a sudden change in his whole manner, "in this business I'm goin' to trate you as a friend and a brother. She loves me, Bartle, and a solemn promise of marriage has passed between us."

"Connor," said Bartle, "it's wondherful, it's wondherful; you couldn't believe what a fool I am; fool! no, but a faint-hearted, cowardly villain."

"What do you mane, Bartle? what the dickins are you drivin' at?"

"Drivin' at! whenever I happen to have an opportunity of makin' a drive that id'—hut! I'm talkin' balderdash. Do you see here, Connor," said he, putting his hand to his neck, "do you see here?"

"To be sure I do. Well, what about *there?*"

"Be my sowl, I'm very careful of—hut!—sure I may as well tell you the whole truth; I sed I was in love; well, man, that was thrue, an'," he added, in a low pithy whisper, "I was near—no, Connor, I won't but go an; it's enough for you to know that I was an' am in love, an' that it'll go hard wid me if ever *any one else* is married to the girl *I'm* in love wid. Now that *my* business is past, let me hear *yours*, poor fellow, an' I'm divilish glad to know, Connor, that—that—why tundher an ouns, that you are not as I am. Be the crass that saved us, Connor, I'm glad of that."

"Why love will set you mad, Bartle, if you don't take care of yourself; an' faith, I dunna but it may do the same with myself, if I'm disappointed. However, the truth is, you must sarve me in this business. I struv to see her twiste, but couldn't, an' I'm afraid of bein' seen spyin' about their place."

"The thruth is, Connor, you want to make me a go-between; a blackfoot; very well, I'll do that same on your account, an' do it well, too, I hope."

It was then arranged that Flanagan, who was personally known to some of the Bodagh's servants, should avail himself of that circumstance, and contrive to gain an interview with Una, in order to convey her a letter from O'Donovan. He was farther enjoined by no means to commit it to the hands of any person save those of Una herself, and, in the event of his not being able to see her, then the letter was to be returned to Connor. If he succeeded, however, in delivering it, he was to await an answer, provided she found an opportunity of sending one; if not, she was to inform Connor, through Flana-

gan, at what time and place he could see her. This arrangement having been made, Connor immediately wrote the letter, and after having despatched Flanagan upon his errand, set himself to perform, by his individual labour, the task which his father had portioned out for both. Ere Bartle's return, Fardorougha came to inspect their progress in the meadow, and, on finding that the servant was absent, he inquired sharply into the cause of it.

"He's gone on a message for me," replied Connor, with the utmost frankness.

"But that's a bad way for him to mind his business," said his father.

"I'll have the task that you set both of us finished," replied the son, "so that you'll lose nothing by his absence, at all events."

"It's wrong, Connor, it's wrong; where did you sind him to?"

"To Bodagh Buie's wid a letter to Una."

"It's a waste of time, an' a loss of work; about that business, I have something to say to your mother an' you to-night afther the supper, when the rest goes to bed."

"I hope, father, you'll do the dacent thing still."

"No: but I hope, son, you'll do the wise thing still; how-an-ever, let me alone now; if you expect me to do anything you mustn't drive me as your mother does. To-night we'll make up a plan that'll outdo Bodagh Buie. Before you come home, Connor, throw a stone or two in that gap, to prevent the cows from gettin' into the hay; it won't cost you much throuble. But, Connor, *honomon dioul*, did you ever see such a gut as Bartle has? He'll brake me out o' house an' home feedin' him; he has a stomach for tenpenny nails; be my word, it 'ud be a charity to give him a dose of oak-bark to make him dacent; he's a divil at atin', an' little good may it do him!"

The hour of supper arrived without Bartle returning, and Connor's impatience began to overcome him, when,

Fardorougha, for the first time, introduced the subject which lay nearest his son's heart.

"Connor," he began, "I've been thinkin' of this affair with Una O'Brien; an' in my opinion there's but one way of it; but if you're a fool and stand in your own light, it's not my fault."

"What is the way, father?" inquired Connor.

"The very same I tould your mother an' you before; run away wid her—I mane, make a runaway match of it—then refuse to marry her unless they come down wid the money. You know after runnin' away wid *you*, nobody else ever would marry *her*, so that rather than see their child disgraced, never fear but they'll pay down on the nail, or maybe bring you both to live wid 'em."

"My sowl to glory, Fardorougha," said the wife, "but your're a bigger an' cunniner ould rogue than ever I tuck you for. By the scapular upon me, if I had a known how you'd turn out, the sarra carry the ring ever you'd put on *my* finger."

"Father," said Connor, "I must be disobedient to you in this, at all evints. It's plain you'll do nothing for us, so there's no use in sayin' anything more about it. I have no manes of supportin' her, and I swear by the blessed sacrayment I'll never bring her to shame or poverty. If I had money to carry me I'd go to America, an' thry my fortune there; but I have not. Father, it's too hard that you should stand in my way when you could so easily make me happy; who have you sich a right to assist as your son—your only son, an' your only child too?"

This was spoken in a tone of respect and sorrow at once impressive and affectionate. His fine features were touched with something beyond sadness or regret, and as the tears stood in his eyes, it was easy to see that he felt much more deeply for his father's want of principle than for anything connected with his own hopes and prospects. In fact, the tears that rolled silently down his cheeks were the tears of shame and sorrow, for a parent who could thus school him to an act of such unparalleled

baseness. As it was, the genius of the miser felt rebuked by the natural delicacy and honour of the son—the old man therefore shrunk back abashed, confused, and moved at the words which he had heard—simple and inoffensive though they were.

"Fardorougha," said the wife, wiping her eyes, that were kindling into indignation, "we're now married goin' an—"

"I think, mother," said Connor, "the less we say about it now the better; with my own good will I'll never spake on the subject."

"You're right, avourneen," replied the mother; "you're right; I'll say nothing—God sees it's no use."

"What would you have me do?" said the old man, rising and walking about in unusual distress and agitation; "you don't know me—I can't do it—*I can't* do it. You say, Honor, I don't care about him; I'd give him my blood; I'd give him my blood to save a hair of his head. My life an' happiness depend on him; but who knows how he an' his wife might mismanage that money if they got it—both young and foolish. It wasn't for nothing it came into my mind what I'm afeard will happen to me yet."

"And what was that, Fardorougha?" asked the wife.

"Sich foreknowledge doesn't come for nothing, Honor. I've had it and felt it hangin' over me this many a long day, that I'd come to starvation yit; an' I see, if you force me to do as you wish, that it'ill happen. I'm as sure of it as that I stand before you; I'm an unfortunate man wid such a fate before me; and yet I'd shed my blood for my boy—I would, an' he ought to know I would; but he wouldn't ax me to starve for him—would you, Connor, avich machree, would you ax your father to starve? I'm unhappy—unhappy, an' my heart's breakin'."

The old man's voice failed him as he uttered the last words; for the conflict which he felt evidently convulsed his whole frame. He wiped his eyes, and again sitting down, he wept bitterly and in silence for many minutes.

A look of surprise, compassion, and deep distress passed between Connor and his mother. The latter also was very much affected, and said,

"Fardorougha, dear, maybe I spake sometimes too cross to you; but if I do, God above knows it's not that I bear you ill-will, but bekase I'm throubled about poor Connor; but I hope I won't speak angry to you agin; at all events, if I do, remember it's only the mother pladin' for her son; the only son an' child that God was plased to sind her."

"Father," added Connor, also deeply moved, "don't distress yourself about me—don't, father, dear. Let things take their chance; but come or go what will, any good fortune that might happen me wouldn't be sweet if it came by givin' you a sore heart."

At this moment the barking of the dog gave notice of approaching footsteps; and in a few moments the careless whistle of Bartle Flanagan was heard within a few yards of the door.

"This is Bartle," said Connor; "maybe, father, his answer may throw some light upon the business. At any rate, as there's no secret in it, we'll all hear what news he brings us."

He had scarcely concluded when the latch was lifted, but Bartle could not enter.

"It's locked and boulted," said Fardorougha; "as he sleeps in the barn, I forgot that he was to come in here any more to-night—open it, Connor."

"For the sake of all the money you keep in the house, father," said Connor, smiling, "it's hardly worth your while to be so timorous; but God help the county treasurer if *he* forgot to bar his door—asy, Bartle, I'm openin' it."

Flanagan immediately entered; and, with all the importance of a confidant, took his seat at the fire.

"Well, Bartle," said Connor, "what news?"

"Let the boy get his supper first," said Honor; "Bartle, you must be starved wid the hunger."

233277

"Faith, I'm middling well, I thank you, that same way," replied Bartle; "divil a one o' me but's as ripe for my supper as a July cherry; an' wid the blessin' o' Heaven upon my endayvours, I'll soon show you what good execution is."

A deep groan from Fardorougha gave back a fearful echo to the truth of this formidable annunciation.

"Arn't you well, Fardorougha," asked Bartle.

"Throth I'm not, Bartle; never was more uncomfortable in my life."

Flanagan immediately commenced his supper, which consisted of flummery and new milk—a luxury among the lower ranks which might create envy in an epicure. As he advanced in the work of destruction, the gray eye of Fardorougha, which followed every spoonful that entered his mouth, scintillated like that of a cat when rubbed down the back, though from a directly opposite feeling. He turned and twisted on the chair, and looked from his wife to his son, then turned up his eyes, and appeared to feel as if a dagger entered his heart with every additional dig of Bartle's spoon into the flummery. The son and wife smiled at each other; for they could enjoy those petty sufferings of Fardorougha with a great deal of good humour.

"Bartle," said Connor, "what's the news?"

"Divil a word worth tellin'; at laste that I can hear."

"I mane from Bodagh Buie's."

Bartle stared at him; "Bodagh Buie's! what do I know about Bodagh Buie? are you ravin'?"

"Bartle," said Connor, smiling, "my father and mother knows all about it; an' about your going to Una with the letter. I have no sacrets from them."

"Hoot toot! that's a horse of another colour; but you wouldn't have me, widout knowin' as much, to go to betray trust. In the mane time I may as well finish my supper before I begin to tell you whatsomever I happen to know about it."

Another deep groan from Fardorougha followed the last observation.

At length the work of demolition ceased, and after Honor had put past the empty dish, Bartle, having wiped and uttered a hiccup or two, thus commenced to dole out his intelligence:

"Whin I wint to the Bodagh's," said Bartle, "it was wid great schamin' an' throuble I got a sight of Miss Una at all, in regard of—(hiccup)—in regard of not knowin' that there was any sich message for her—(hiccup). But happenin' to know Kitty Lowry, I made bould to go into the kitchen to ax, you know, how was her aunt's family up in Skelgy, when who should I find before me in it but Sally and Miss Una—(hiccup). Of coorse I shook hands wid her—wid Kitty I mane; 'an' Kitty,' said I, 'I was sent in wid a message from the master to you; he's in the haggard an' wants you.' So, begad, out—(hiccup)—out she goes, an' the coast bein' clear, 'Miss Una,' says I, 'here's a scrape of a letther from Mr. Connor O'Donovan; read it, an' if you can write him an answer, do; if you haven't time, say whatever you have to say by me.' She go—(hiccup)—she got all colours when I handed it to her; an' run away, sayin' to me, 'wait for a while, an' don't go till I see you.' In a minute or two Kitty comes in agin as mad as the dickens wid me: the curse o' the crows an you,' says she, 'why did you make me run a fool's errand for no rason? The masther wasn't in the haggard, an' didn't want me good or bad.'

"Bartle," said the impatient lover, "pass all that over for the present, an' let us know the answer, if she sent any."

"Sent any! be my sowl, she did so; afther readin' your letther, an' findin' that she could depind on me, she said that, for fear of any remarks bein' made about my waitin', espishially as I live at present in this family, it would be better, she thought, to answer it by word o' mouth. 'Tell him,' said she, 'that I didn't think he wa—(hiccup) ("Queen o' Heaven!" from his master)—was so dull an' ignorant o' the customs of the country, as not to know that whin young people want to see one another they stay

from mass wid an expectation that'—begad, I disremimber exactly her own words; but it was as much as to say that she staid at home last Sunday expectin' to see you when they were all gone to mass."

"Well, but, Bartle, what else? short an' sweet, man."

"Why, she'll meet you on next Thursday night, God willin', in the same place; an' whin I axed her where, she said you knew it yourself."

"An' is that all?"

"No, it's not all; she said it 'ud be better to mention the thing to her father. Afther thinkin' it over, she says, 'as your father has the na—(hiccup) (Saints above!)—name of bein' so rich, she doesn't know if a friend 'ud interfere but his consint might be got; an' that's all I have to say about it, barrin' that she's a very purty girl, an' I advise you not to be *too sure of her yet*, Connor. So now I'm for the barn: good night, Far—(hiccup) ("at my cost you do it!" from the miser again) Fardorougha."

He rose and proceeded to his sleeping place in the barn, whither Connor, who was struck by his manner, accompanied him.

"Bartle," said O'Donovan, "did you take anything since I saw you last?"

"Only share of two naggins wid my brother Antony at Peggy Finigan's."

"I noticed it upon you," observed Connor; "but I don't think they did."

"An' if they did, too, it's not high thrason, I hope."

"No; but, Bartle, I'm oblaged to you. You've acted as a friend to me, an' I won't forget it to you."

"*Dar Deah*, an' I'm so much oblaged to you, Connor, that I'll remimber your employin' me in this the longest day I have to live. But, Connor?"

"Well, Bartle."

"I'd take the sacrement, that, after all, a ring you'll never put on her."

"And what makes you think so, Bartle?"

"I don't—I do—(hiccup)—don't know; but, somehow,

something or another tells it to me that you won't; others is fond of her, I suppose, as well as yourself; and, of coorse, they'll stand betune you."

"Ay, but I'm sure of her."

"*Der Chriastha*, but you're not; wait till I see you man and wife, an' thin I'll say so. Here's myself, Bartle, is in love, an' dhough I don't think that ever the girl will or would marry me, be the crass of heaven no other man will have her. Now, how do you know but you may have some one like me; like me, Connor, to stand against you?"

"Bartle," said Connor, laughing, "your head's a little moidher'd; give me your hand; whish! the devil take you, man, don't wring my fingers off. Say your prayers, Bartle, an' go to sleep. I say agin I won't forget your kindness to me this night."

Flanagan had now deposited himself upon his straw bed, and after having tucked the bedclothes about him, said, in the relaxed indolent voice of a man about to sleep,

"Good night, Connor; throth, my head's a little soft to-night; good night."

"Good night, Bartle."

"Connor?"

"Well!"

"Didn't I stand to you to-night? Very well; goo—(hiccup) good night!"

On Connor's return, a serious conclave was held upon the best mode of procedure in a matter which presented difficulties that appeared to be insurmountable. The father seizing upon the advice transmitted by Una herself, as that which he had already suggested, insisted that the most judicious course was to propose for her openly, and without appearing to feel that there was any inferiority on the part of Connor.

"If they talk about wealth, Connor," said he, "say that you are my son, an' that—that—no, no, I'm too poor for

sich a boast; but say that you will be able to take good care of anything you get."

At this moment the door, which Connor had not bolted, as his father would have done, opened, and Bartle, wrapped in the treble folds of a winnow-cloth, made a distant appearance.

"Beg pardon, Connor; I forgot to say that Una's brother, the young priest out o' Maynooth, will be at home from his uncle's, where it appears he is at present; and Miss Una would wish that the proposal 'ud be made while *he's* at his father's. She says he'll stand her friend, come or go what will. I forgot, begad, to mention it before, so beg pardon, an' wishes you all good night!"

This information tended to confirm them in the course recommended by Fardorougha. It was accordingly resolved upon that he (Fardorougha) himself should wait upon Bodagh Buie, and in the name of his son, formally propose for the hand of his daughter.

To effect this, however, was a matter of no ordinary difficulty, as they apprehended that the Bodagh and his wife would recoil with indignation at the bare notion of even condescending to discuss a topic which, in all probability, they would consider as an insult. Not, after all, that there existed, according to the opinion of their neighbours, such a vast disparity in the wealth of each; on the contrary, many were heard to assert, that, of the two, Fardorougha had the heavier purse. His character, however, was held in such abhorrence by all who knew him, and he ranked, in point of personal respectability and style of living, so far beneath the Bodagh, that we question if any ordinary occurrence could be supposed to fall upon the public with greater amazement than a marriage, or the report of a marriage, between any member of the two families. The O'Donovans felt, however, that it was better to make the experiment already agreed on, than longer to remain in a state of uncertainty about it. Should it fail, the position of the lovers, though perhaps rendered

somewhat less secure, would be such as to suggest, so far as they themselves were concerned, the necessity of a more prompt and effectual course of action. Fardorougha expressed his intention of opening the matter on the following day; but his wife, with a better knowledge of female character, deemed it more judicious to defer it until after the interview which was to take place between Connor and Una on the succeeding Thursday. It might be better, for instance, to make the proposal first to Mrs. O'Brien herself, or, on the other hand, to the Bodagh; but touching that and other matters relating to what was proposed to be done, Una's opinion and advice might be necessary.

Little passed, therefore, worthy of note, during the intermediate time, except a short conversation between Bartle and Connor on the following day, as they returned to field from dinner.

"Bartle," said the other, "you wor a little soft last night: or rather a good dale so."

"Faith, no doubt o' that; but when a man meets an ould acquaintance or two, they don't like to refuse a thrate. I fell in wid three or four *boys*, all friends o' mine, an' we had a sup on account of what's expected."

As he uttered these words, he looked at Connor with an eye which seemed to say, you are not in a certain secret with which I am acquainted.

"Why," replied Connor, "what do you mane, Bartle? I thought you wor with your brother; at laste, you tould me so."

Flanagan started on hearing this.

"Wid my brother?" said he, "why, I—I—what else could I tell you? he was along wid the boys when I met them."

"Took a sup on account o' what's expected! an' what's the manin' o' that, Bartle?"

"Why, what would it mane—but—but—your marriage?"

"An' thundher an' fury," exclaimed Connor, his eye

gleaming, "did you go to betray trust, an' mintion Una's name an' mine, afther what I tould you?"

"Don't be foolish, Connor," replied Flanagan; "is it mad you'd have me to be? I said there was something expected soon, that 'ud surprise them; and when they axed me what it was—honour bright! I gave them a knowin' wink, but said nothin'. Eh! was that breakin' trust? Arrah, be my soul, Connor, you don't trate me well by the words you spoke this blessed minute."

"An' how does it come, Bartle, my boy, that you had one story last night an' another to-day?"

"Faix, very aisily, bekase I forget what I said last night; for sure enough I was more cut than you thought; but didn't I keep it well in before the ould couple?"

"You did fairly enough, I grant that; but the moment you got into the barn a blind man could see it."

"Bekase I didn't care a button wanst I escaped from the eye of your father; any how, bad luck to it for whiskey; I have a murdherin' big heddick all day afther it."

"It's a bad weed, Bartle, and the less a man has to do with it, the less he'll be troubled aither with a sore head or a sore conscience."

"Connor, divil a one, but you're the moral of a good boy; I dunna a fault you have but one."

"Come, let us hear it."

"I'll tell you some day, but not now, not now; but *I will* tell you, an' I'll let you know the reason thin that I didn't mintion it now; an' in the mane time I'll sit down an' take a smoke."

"A smoke! why I never knew you smoked."

"Nor I myself till last night. This tindher box I was made a present of to light my pipe, when not near a coal. Begad, now that I think of it, I suppose it was smokin' that knocked me up so much last night, an' made my head so sick to-day."

"It help'd it, I'll engage; if you take my advice it's a custom you won't larn."

"I have a good dale to throuble me, Connor; you know I have; an' what we are brought down to now: I have more nor you'd believe to think of; as much, any way, as 'ill make this box an' steel useful, I hope, when I'm frettin'."

Flanagan spoke truth in assuring Connor that the apology given for his intoxication on the preceding night had escaped his memory. It was fortunate for him, indeed, that O'Donovan, like all candid and ingenuous persons, was utterly devoid of suspicion, otherwise he might have perceived by the discrepance in the two accounts, as well as by Flanagan's confusion, that he was a person in whom it might not be prudent to place much confidence.

CHAPTER VI.

THE tryste between Connor and Una was held at the same place and hour as before, and so rapid a progress had love made in each of their hearts, that we question if the warmth of their interview, though tender and innocent, would be apt to escape the censure of our stricter readers. Both were depressed by the prospect that lay before them, for Connor frankly assured her that he feared no earthly circumstance could ever soften his father's heart, so far as to be prevailed upon to establish him in life.

"What then can I do, my darling Una? If your father and mother won't consent, as I fear they won't, am I to bring you into the miserable cabin of a day labourer? for to this, the son of a man so wealthy as my father must sink. No, Una dear, I have sworn never to bring you to poverty, an' I will not."

"Connor," she replied, somewhat gravely, "I thought you had formed a different opinion of me. You know but little of your own Una's heart, if you think she wouldn't live with you in a cabin a thousand an' a thousand times sooner than she would live with any other in a palace. I love you for your own sake, Connor; but it appears you don't think so."

Woman can never bear to have her love undervalued, nor the moral dignity of a passion which can sacrifice all worldly and selfish considerations to its own purity of attachment, unappreciated. When she uttered the last words, therefore, tears of bitter sorrow, mingled with offended pride, came to her aid. She sobbed for some moments, and again went on to reproach him with forming so unfair an estimate of her affection.

"I repeat that I loved you for yourself only, Connor, and I think of what *I* would feel if *you* refused to spend your life in a cottage with me. If I thought you wished to marry me, not because I am Una O'Brien, but the daughter of a wealthy man, my heart would break; and if I thought you were not true-minded, and pure-hearted, and honourable, I would rather be dead than united to you at all."

"I love you so well, and so much, Una, that I doubt I'm not worthy of you; an' it's fear of seein' you brought down to daily labour that's crushing an' breaking my heart."

"But, dear Connor, what is there done by any cottager's wife, that I don't do every day of my life? Do you think that my mother lets me pass my time in idleness, or that I myself could bear to be unemployed, even if she did; I can milk, make butter, spin, sew, wash, knit, and clean a kitchen; why, you have no notion," she added, with a smile, "what a clever cottager's wife I'd make."

"Oh, Una," said Connor, now melted into tenderness greater than he had ever before felt; "Una, dear, it's useless, it's useless; I can't, no, I couldn't, an' I will not live without you, even if we were to beg together; but what is to be done?"

"Now," she replied, "while my brother John is at home, is the time to propose it to my father and mother, who look upon him with eyes of such affection and delight, that I am half inclined to think their consent may be gained."

"Maybe, darling, his consent will be as hard to gain as their own."

"Now," she replied, fondly, "only you're a hard-hearted thing that's afraid to live in a cottage with me, I could tell you some good news—or rather you doubt me, an' fear that I wouldn't live in one with you."

A kiss was the reply, after which he said,

"With you, my dear Una, now that you're satisfied, I

would live and die in a prison; with *you*, with *you*—in whatever state of life we may be placed, *with* you, but *without* you—never, I could not—I could not—"

"Well, we are young, you know, and neither of us proud, and I am not a lazy girl, indeed I am not; but you forget the good news."

"I forget that, and everything else but yourself, darling, while I'm in your company. Oh heavens! if you were once my own, and that we were never to be separated!"

"Well, but the good news!"

"What is it, dear?"

"I have mentioned our affection to my brother, and he has promised to assist us. He has heard of your character, and of your mother's, and says that it's unjust to visit upon you—"

She paused. "You know, my dear Connor, that you must not be offended with anything I say."

"I know, my sweet treasure, what you're going to say," replied Connor, with a smile; "nobody need be delicate in sayin' that my father loves the money, and knows how to put guinea to guinea; that's no secret: I wished he loved it less, to be sure, but it cannot be helped; in the mane time, *ma colleen dhas dhun*—oh, how I love them words! God bless your brother, he must have a kind heart, Una dear, and he must love you very much, when he promises to assist us."

"He has, and will; but, Connor, why did you send such a disagreeable, forward, and prying person as your father's servant, to bring me your message? I do not like him; he almost stared me out of countenance."

"Poor fellow," said Connor, "I feel a good dale for him, and I think he's an honest, good-hearted boy, an' besides, he's in love himself."

"I know he was always a starer, and I say again, *I don't* like him."

"But as the case stands, dear Una, I have no one else to trust to; at all events, he's in our secret, and the best

way, if he's not honest, is to keep him in it; at laste, if we put him out of it now, he might be talkin' to our disadvantage afterward."

"There's truth in that, and we must only trust him with as little of our real secrets as possible; I cannot account for the strong prejudice I feel against him, and have felt for the last two years. He always dressed above his means, and once or twice attempted to speak to me."

"Well, but I know he's in love with some one, for he tould me so; poor fellow, I'm bound, my dear Una, to show him any kindness in my power."

After some farther conversation, it was once more decided that Fardorougha should, on the next day, see the Bodagh and his wife, in order to ascertain whether their consent could be obtained to the union of our young and anxious lovers. This step, as the reader knows, was every way in accordance with Fardorougha's inclination. Connor himself would have preferred his mother's advocacy to that of a person possessing such a slender hold on their good will as his other parent. But, upon consulting with her, she told him that the fact of the proposal coming from Fardorougha might imply a disposition on his part to provide for his son; at all events, she hoped that contradiction, the boast of superior wealth, or some fortunate collision of mind and principle, might strike a spark of generous feeling out of her husband's heart, which nothing, she knew, under strong excitement, such as might arise from the bitter pride of the O'Briens, could possibly do. Besides, as she had no favourable expectations from the interview, she thought it an unnecessary and painful task to subject herself to the insults which she apprehended from the Bodagh's wife, whose pride and importance towered far and high over those even of her consequential husband.

This just and sensible view of the matter, on the part of the mother, satisfied Connor, and reconciled him to the father's disinclination to be accompanied by her to

the scene of conflict; for, in truth, Fardorougha protested against her assistance with a bitterness which could not easily be accounted for.

"If your mother goes, let her go by herself," said he; "for I'll not intherfare in't if she does. I'll take the dirty Bodagh and his fat wife my own way, which I can't do if Honor comes to be snubbin' an' makin' little o' me afore them. Maybe I'll pull down their pride for them betther than you think, an' in a way they're not prepared for; them an' their jantin' car!"

Neither Connor nor his mother could help being highly amused at the singularity of the miserable and parsimonious display resorted to by Fardorougha, in preparing for this extraordinary mission. Out of an old, strongly locked chest, he brought forth a *gala* coat, which had been duly aired, but not thrice worn within the last twenty years. The progress of time and fashion had left it so odd, *outre*, and ridiculous, that Connor, though he laughed, could not help feeling depressed on considering the appearance his father must make when dressed, or rather disfigured, in it. Next came a pair of knee breeches by the same hand, and which, in compliance with the taste of the age that produced them, were made to button so far down as the calf of the leg. Then appeared a waistcoat, whose long, pointed flaps reached nearly to the knees. Last of all, was produced a hat, not more than three inches deep in the crown, and brimmed so narrowly, that a spectator would almost imagine the leaf had been cut off. Having pranked himself out in these habiliments, contrary to the strongest expostulations of both wife and son, he took his staff and set forth. But lest the reader should expect a more accurate description of his person, when dressed, we shall endeavour at all events to present him with a loose outline. In the first place, his head was surmounted with a hat that resembled a flat skillet, wanting the handle; his coat, from which avarice and penury had caused him to shrink away, would have fitted a man

twice his size, and as he had become much stooped, its tail, which, at the best, had been preposterously long, now nearly swept the ground. To look at him behind, in fact, he appeared all body. The flaps of his waistcoat he had pinned up with his own hands, by which piece of exquisite taste he displayed a pair of thighs so thin, and disproportioned to his small-clothes, that he resembled a boy who happens to wear the breeches of a full-grown man, so that, to look at him in front, he appeared all legs. A pair of shoes, polished with burned straw and buttermilk, and surmounted by two buckles, scoured away to skeletons, completed his costume. In this garb he set out with a crook-headed staff, into which long use, and the habit of griping fast whatever he got in his hand, had actually worn the marks of his forefinger and thumb.

Bodagh Buie, his wife, and their two children, were very luckily assembled in the parlour, when the nondescript figure of the deputy wooer made his appearance on that part of the neat road which terminated at the gate of the little lawn that fronted the hall-door. Here there was another gate to the right, that opened into the farm or kitchen yard; and as Fardorougha hesitated which to enter, the family within had an opportunity of getting a clearer view of his features and person.

"Who is that quare figure standin' there?" inquired the Bodagh; "did you ever see such a—ah thin, who can he be?"

"Somebody comin' to some o' the sarvingts, I suppose," replied his wife; "why, thin, it's not unlike little Dick *Croitha*, the fairyman."

In sober truth, Fardorougha was so completely disguised by his dress, especially by his hat, whose shallowness and want of brim gave his face and head so wild and eccentric an appearance, that we question if his own family, had they not seen him dress, could have recognised him. At length he turned into the kitchen-yard, and addressing a labourer whom he met, asked,

"I say, nabour, which is the right way into Bodagh Buie's house?"

"There's two right ways into it, an' you may take aither o' them; but if you want any favour from him, you had betther call him *Mr.* O'Brien. The Bodagh's a name was first given to his father, an' he bein' a dacenter man, doesn't like it, although it sticks to him; so there's a lift for you, my hip-striddled little codger."

"But which is the right door o' the house?"

"There it is, the kitchen—peg in—that's *your* inthrance, barrin' you're a gintleman in disguise; an' if you be, why turn out again to that other gate, strip off your shoes, and pass up ginteely on your tippy-toes, and give a thunderin' whack to the green ring that's hangin' from the door. But see, friend," added the man, "maybe you'd do one a sarvice?"

"How," said Fardorougha, looking earnestly at him; "what is it?"

"Why, to lave us a lock o' your hair before you go," replied the wag, with a grin.

The miser took no notice whatsoever of this, but was turning quietly out of the yard, to enter by the lawn, when the man called out in a commanding voice,

"Back here, you codger—tundher an' thump; back, I say; *you* won't be let in that way; thramp back, you leprechaun, into the kitchen—eh? you wont; well, well, take what you'll get, an' that'll be the way back agin."

'Twas at this moment that the keen eye of Una recognised the features of her lover's father, and a smile which she felt it impossible to subdue, settled upon her face, which became immediately mantled with blushes. On hurrying out of the room she plucked her brother's sleeve, who followed her to the hall.

"I can scarcely tell you, dear John," she said, speaking rapidly, "it's Fardorougha O'Donovan, Connor's father; and as you know his business, stay in the parlour;" she squeezed his hand, and added, with a smile on her face and a tear in her eye, "I fear it's all over with me,

I don't know whether to laugh or cry; but stay, John, dear, and fight my battle—poor Una's battle."

She ran up stairs, and immediately one of the most beggarly, sordid, and pusillanimous knocks that ever spoke of starvation and misery was heard at the door.

"I will answer it myself," thought the amiable brother; "for if my father or mother does, he surely will not be allowed in."

John could scarcely preserve a grave face when Fardorougha presented himself.

"Is *Misther* O'Brien widin," inquired the usurer, shrewdly availing himself of the hint he received from the servant.

"My father is," replied John; "have the goodness to step in."

Fardorougha entered immediately, followed by young O'Brien, who said,

"Father, this is Mr. O'Donovan, who, it appears, has some important business with the family."

"Don't be mistherin' *me*," replied Fardorougha, helping himself to a seat; "I'm too poor to be misthered."

"With this family!" exclaimed the father, in amazement; "what business can Fardorougha Donovan have with *this* family, John?"

"About our childhre," replied the miser; "about my son and your daughther."

"An' what about them?" inquired Mrs. O'Brien; "do you dar to mintion them in the same day together?"

"Why not?" said the miser; "ay, an' on the same night, too."

"Upon my reputaytion, Mr. O'Donovan, you're extremely kind; now be a little more so, and let us undherstand you," said the Bodagh.

"Poor Una," thought John; "all's lost; he will get himself kicked out to a certainty."

"I think it's time we got them married," replied Fardorougha; "the sooner it's done the betther and the safer for both o' them, espeshally for the *colleen*."

"*Dar a Lorha*, he's cracked," said Mrs. O'Brien; "sarra one o' the poor sowl but's cracked about his money."

"Poor sowl, woman alive! wor you never poor yourself?"

"Yis, I wor; an' I'm not ashamed to own it; but, *Chierna*, Frank," she added, addressing her husband, "there's no use in spakin' to him."

"Fardorougha," said O'Brien, seriously, "what brought you here?"

"Why, to tell you an' your wife the state that my son Connor and your daughter's in about one another; an' to advise you both, if you have sinse, to get them married afore worse happens. It's *your* business more than *mine*."

"You're right," said the Bodagh, aside to his wife; "he's sartinly deranged. Fardorougha," he added, "have you lost any money lately?"

"I'm losin' every day," said the other; "I'm broke assistin' them that won't thank me, let alone paying me as they ought."

"Then you have lost nothing more than usual?"

"If I didn't, I tell you there's good chance of losin' it before me; can a man call any money of his safe that's in another man's pocket?"

"An' so you've come to propose a marriage between your son and my daughter, yet you lost no money, an' you're not mad!"

"Divil a morsel o' me's mad; but you'll be so, if you refuse to let this match go an."

"Out wid him—*a shan roghara*,"* shouted Mrs. O'Brien, in a state of most dignified offence; "*Damnho orth*, you ould knave, is it the son of a misert that has fleeced an' robbed the whole counthry side that we 'ud let our daughter, that resaved the finish to her eggjication in a Dubling boordin' shool marry wid? *Vich na hoiah*, this day!"

* The old rogue.

"You had no sich scruple yourself, ma'am," replied the bitter usurer; "when you bounced at the son of the ould Bodagh Buie, an' every one knows what *he* was."

"He!" said the good woman; "an' is it runnin' up comparishments betuxt yourself an' him you are afther? Why, Saint Pether wouldn't thrive on your money, you nager."

"Maybe Saint Pether thruv an worse; but haven't you thruv as well on the Bodagh's as if it had been *honestly* come by; I defy you an' the world both to say that ever I tuck a penny from any one, more than my right. Lay that to the mimory of the ould Bodagh, an' see if it'll fit. It's no *light guinea*, any how."

Had Fardorougha been a man of ordinary standing and character in the country, from whom an insult *could* be taken, he would no doubt have, been by a very summary process, expelled the parlour. The history of his querulous and irascible temper, however, was so well known, and his offensive eccentricity of manner, a matter of such established fact, that the father and son, on glancing at each other, were seized with the same spirit, and both gave way to an uncontrollable fit of laughter.

"Is it a laughin' stock you're makin' of it," said Mrs. O'Brien, highly indignant.

"Faith, achora, it may be *no* laughin' stock afther all," replied the Bodagh.

"I think, mother," observed John, "that you and my father had better treat the matter with more seriousness. Connor O'Donovan is a young man not to be despised by any person at all near his own class of life who regards the peace and welfare of a daughter. His character stands very high; indeed, in every way unimpeachable."

The bitter scowl which had sat upon the small dark features of Fardorougha, when replying to the last attack of Mrs. O'Brien, passed away as John spoke. The old man turned hastily round, and surveying the eulogist of his son, said,

"God bless you, asthore, for thim words; and they're thrue; thrue as the gospel; arrah, what are you both so proud of? I defy you to get the aquil of my son in the barony of Lisnamona, either for face, figure, or timper. I say he's fit to be a husband for as good a girl as ever stood in your daughter's shoes; and from what I hear of her, she's as good a girl as ever the Almighty put breath in; God bless you, young man! you're a credit yourself to any parents."

"An' we have nothin' to say aginst your son, nor aginst your wife aither," replied the Bodagh; "an' if your own name was clear—if you wor looked upon as they are—tut, I'm spaking nonsense! How do I know whether ever your son and my daughter spoke a word to one another or not?"

"I'll go bail Oona never opened her lips to him," said her mother; "I'll go bail she had more spirit."

"An' I'll go bail she can't live widout him, an' will have him whether *you* like it or not," said Fardorougha.

"Mother," observed John, "will you and my father come into the next room for a minute; I wish to say a word or two to each of you; and will you, Fardorougha, have the goodness to sit here till we return?"

"Devil a notion," replied O'Donovan, "I have of stirrin' my foot till the thing's settled one way or other."

"Now," said young O'Brien, when they had got into the back parlour, "it's right that you both should know to what length the courtship between Una and Connor O'Donovan has gone."

"Coortship! *Vich na hoiah!* sure she wouldn't go to coort wid the son o' that ould schamer."

"I'm beginning to fear that it's too thrue," observed the Bodagh; "and if she has—but let us hear, John."

"It's perfectly true, indeed, mother, that she *has*," said the son. "Yes, and they are both this moment pledged, betrothed, promised, *solemnly* promised, to each other; and in my opinion the old man within is acting a more natural part than either of you give him credit for."

"Well, well, well," exclaimed the mother; "who,

afther that, would ever thrust a daughter? The girl that we rared up as tindher as a chicking, to go to throw herself away upon the son of ould Fardorougha Donovan, the misert. Confusion to the ring ever he'll put an her! I'd see her *stretched** first."

"I agree with you in that, Bridget," said the husband; "if it was only to punish her thrachery and desate, I'll take good care a ring will never go on them; but how do you know all this, John?"

"From Una's own lips, father."

The Bodagh paced to and fro in much agitation; one hand in his smallclothes pocket, the other twirling his watch key as rapidly as he could. The mother, in the mean time, had thrown herself into a chair, and gave way to a violent fit of grief.

"And you have this from Una's own lips?"

"Indeed, father, I have; and it is much to her credit that she was candid enough to place such confidence in her brother."

"Pledged and promised to one another! Bridget, who could believe this?"

"Believe it! I don't believe it: it's only a schame of the hussey to get him. Oh, thin, Queen of Heaven, this day, but it's black news to us!"

"John," said the father, "tell Una to come down to us."

"Father, I doubt that's rather a trying task for her. I wish you wouldn't insist."

"Go off, sir; she must come down immediately. I'll have it from her own lips, too."

Without another word of remonstrance the son went to bring her down. When the brother and sister entered the room, O'Brien still paced the floor. He stood, and turning his eyes upon his daughter with severe displeasure, was about to speak, but he appeared to have lost the power of utterance; and after one or two ineffectual attempts, the big tears fairly rolled down his cheeks.

* Dead.

"See, see," said the mother, "see what you have brought us to. Is it thrue that you're promised to Fardorougha's son?"

Una tottered over to a chair, and the blood left her cheeks; her lips became dry, and she gasped for breath.

"Why don't you think it worth your while to answer me?" continued the mother.

The daughter gave a look of deep distress and supplication at her brother; but when she perceived her father in tears, her head sank down upon her bosom.

"What! what! Una," exclaimed the Bodagh, "Una—" But ere he could complete the question the timid creature fell senselesss upon the floor.

For a long time she lay in that friendly trance; for such, in truth, it was to a delicate being, subjected to an ordeal so painful as that she was called upon to pass through. We have, indeed, remarked that there is in the young, especially in those of the softer sex, a feeling of terror, and shame, and confusion, when called upon by their parents to disclose a forbidden passion, that renders its avowal perhaps the most formidable task which the young heart can undergo. It is a fearful trial for the youthful, and one which parents ought to conduct with surpassing delicacy and tenderness, unless they wish to drive the ingenuous spirit into the first steps of falsehood and deceit.

"Father," said John, "I think you may rest satisfied with what you witness; and I am sure it cannot make you or my mother happy to see poor Una miserable."

Una, who had been during the greater part of her swoon supported in her weeping and alarmed mother's arms, now opened her eyes, and after casting an affrighted look about the room, she hid her face in her mother's bosom, and exclaimed, as distinctly as the violence of sobbing grief would permit her:

"Oh, mother, dear, have pity on me; bring me up stairs and I will tell *you*."

"I do, I do pity you," said the mother, kissing her; "I know you'll be a good girl yet, Oona."

"Una," said her father, placing his hand gently on her shoulder, "was I ever harsh to you, or did I—"

"Father, dear," she returned, interrupting him, "I would have told you and my mother, but that I was afraid."

There was something so utterly innocent and artless in this reply, that each of the three persons present felt sensibly affected by its extreme and childlike simplicity.

"Don't be afraid of me, Una," continued the Bodagh, "but answer me truly, like a good girl; and I swear upon my reputaytion that I won't be angry. Do you love the son of this Fardorougha?"

"Not, father, because he's Fardorougha's son," said Una, whose face was still hid in her mother's bosom; "I would rather he wasn't."

"But you *do* love him?"

"For three years he has scarcely been out of my mind."

Something that might be termed a smile crossed the countenance of the Bodagh at this intimation.

"God help you, for a foolish child," said he; "you're a poor counsellor when left to defend your own cause."

"She won't defend it by a falsehood, at all events," observed her trustworthy and affectionate brother.

"No, she wouldn't," said the mother; "and I did her wrong a while ago to say that she'd schame anything about it."

"And are you and Connor O'Donovan promised to aich other?" inquired the father again.

"But it wasn't *I* that proposed the promise," returned Una.

"Oh, the desperate villain," exclaimed her father, "to be guilty of such a thing; but you took the promise, Una? you did, you did, I needn't ask."

"No," replied Una.

"No!" re-echoed the father; "then you did *not* give the promise."

"I mean," she rejoined, "that you needn't ask."

"Oh, faith, that alters the case extramely. Now, Una, this, all this promising that has passed betune you and Connor O'Donovan is mere folly. If you prove to be the good obadient girl that I hope you are, you'll put him out of your head, and thin you can give back to one another whatever promises you made."

This was succeeded by a silence of more than a minute. Una at length arose, and with a composed energy of manner, that was evident by her sparkling eye and bloodless cheek, she approached her father, and calmly kneeling down, said slowly but firmly:

"Father, if *nothing else* can satisfy you, *I will* give back my promise; but then, father, it will break my heart, for I know, I feel, how I love him, and how I'm loved by him."

"I'll get you a better husband," replied her father, "far more wealthy and more respectable than he is."

"I'll give back the promise," said she; "but the man is not living, except Connor O'Donovan, that will ever call me wife. More wealthy! more respectable! oh, it was only *himself* I loved. Father, I'm on my knees before you, and before my mother; I have only one request to make; oh, don't break your daughter's heart!"

"God direct us," exclaimed her mother; "it's hard to know how to act. If it would go so hard upon her, sure—"

"Amen," said her husband; "may God direct us to the best. I'm sure God knows," he continued, now much affected, "that I would rather break my own heart than yours, Una. Get up, dear, rise. John, how would you advise us?"

"I don't see what serious objection, after all," replied the son, "either you or my mother can have to Connor O'Donovan. He is every way worthy of her, if he is equal to his character; and as for wealth, I have often

heard it said that his father was a richer man than yourself."

"Afther all," said the mother, "she might be very well wid him."

"I'll tell you what I'll do then," said the Bodagh; "let us see the ould man himself, and if he settles his son dacently in life, as he can do if he wishes, why I won't see that poor, foolish, innocent girl breaking her heart."

Una, who sat with her face still averted, now ran to her father, and throwing her arms about his neck, wept aloud, but said nothing.

"Ay, ay," said the latter, "it's very fine now that you have everything your own way, you girsha; but, sure, you're all the daughter we have, achora; and it would be too bad not to let you have a *little* of your own opinion in the choice of a husband. Now, go up stairs, or where you plase, till we see what can be done with Fardorougha himself."

With smiling face and glistening eyes, Una passed out of the room, scarcely sensible whether she walked, ran, or flew, while the others went to renew the discussion with Fardorougha.

"Well," said the miser, "you found out, I suppose, that she can't do widout him?"

"Provided we consint to the marriage," asked the Bodagh, "how will you settle your son in life?"

"Who would I settle in life, if I wouldn't settle my only son?" replied the other; "who else is there to get all I have?"

"That's very true," observed the Bodagh; "but state plainly what you'll do for him on his marriage."

"Do you consint to the marriage all of yees?"

"That's not the question," said the other.

"Divil a word I'll answer till I know whether yees do or not," said Fardorougha. "Say at once that you consint, and thin I'll spake; I'll say what I'll do."

The Bodagh looked inquiringly at his wife and son.

The latter nodded affirmatively. "We do consent," he added.

"That shows your own sinse," said the old man. "Now what fortune will you portion your *colleen* wid?"

"That depinds upon what *you'll* do for your son," returned the Bodagh.

"And that depinds upon what *you'll* do for your daughter," replied the sagacious old miser.

"At this rate we're not likely to agree."

"Nothin's asier; you have only to spake out; besides, it's your business, bein' the colleen's father."

"Try him, and name something fair," whispered John.

"If I give her a farm of thirty acres of good land, stocked and all, what will *you* do for Connor?"

"More than that, five times over; I'll give him all I have. An' now, when will we marry them? Throth, it was best to make things clear," added the knave, "and undherstand one another at wanst. When will we marry them?"

"Not till you say out openly and fairly the exact sum of money you'll lay down on the nail, an' that before ever a ring goes upon them."

"Give it up, acushla," said the wife; "you see there's no schrewin' a promise out of him, let alone a penny."

"What 'ud yees have me do?" said the old man, raising his voice. "Won't he have all I'm worth? Who else is to have it? Am I to make a beggar of myself to plase you? Can't they live on your farm till I die, an' thin it'll all come to them?"

"And no thanks to you for that, Fardorougha," said the Bodagh. "No, no; I'll never buy a pig in a poke. If you won't act ginerously by your son, go home, in the name of goodness, and let us hear no more about it."

"Why, why?" said the miser, "are yees mad to miss what I can lave him? If you knew how much it is, you'd snap—but, God help me, what am I sayin'? I'm poorer than anybody thinks. I am, I am; an' will starve among you all, if God hasn't sed it. Do you think I don't love

my son as well, an' a thousand times better than you do your daughter? God alone sees how my heart's in him; in my own Connor, that never gave me a sore heart; my brave, my dutiful boy!"

He paused, and the scalding tears here ran down his shrunk and furrowed cheeks, while he wrung his hands, started to his feet, and looked about him like a man encompassed by dangers that threaten instant destruction.

"If you love your son so well," said John, mildly, "why do you grudge to share your wealth with him? It is but natural, and it is your duty."

"Natural! what's natural? to give away, is it to love him you mane? It is, it's *un*natural to give it away. He's the best son, the best; what do you mane, I say? let me alone, let me alone; I could give my blood, my blood, to sich a boy; but you want to kill me, you want to kill me, an' thin you'll get all; but he'll cross you, never fear; my boy will save me; he's not tired o' me; he'd give up fifty girls sooner than see a hair of his father's head injured; so do your best, while I have Connor I'm not afraid of yees. Thanks be to God that sent him," he exclaimed, "oh thanks be to God that sent him to comfort an' protect his father from the schames and villany of them that 'ud bring him to starvation for their own ends!"

"Father," said John, in a low tone, "this struggle between avarice and natural affection is awful. See how his small gray eyes glare, and the froth rises white to his thin shrivelled lips. What is to be done?"

"Fardorougha," said the Bodagh, "it's over; don't distress yourself, keep your money, there will be no match between our childre."

"Why? why won't there?" he screamed; "why won't there, I say? Haven't *you* enough for them until *I* die? Would you see your child breakin' her heart? Bodagh, you have no nathur in you, no bowels for your *colleen dhas*. But I'll spake for her; I'll argue wid you till this

time to-morrow, or I'll make you show feelin' to her, an' if you don't, if you don't—"

"Wid the help o' God, the man's as mad as a March hare," observed Mrs. O'Brien, "and there's no use in losin' breath wid him."

"If it's not insanity," said John, "I know not what it is."

"Young man," proceeded Fardorougha, who evidently paid no attention to what the mother and son said, being merely struck by the voice of the latter; "young man, you're kind, you have sinse and feelin'; spake to your father; don't let him destroy his child; don't ax him to starve me, that never did him harm. He loves you, he loves you, for he can't but love you; sure, I know how I love my own darlin' boy; oh, spake to him; I'll go down on my two knees to you, to beg, as you hope to see God in heaven, that you'll make him not brake his daughter's heart! She's your own sister; there's but the two of yees, an' oh, don't desart her in this throuble, this heavy, heavy throuble!"

"I won't interfere farther in it," replied the young man, who, however, felt disturbed and anxious in the extreme.

"Mrs. O'Brien," said he, turning imploringly, and with a wild haggard look, to the Bodagh's wife, "I'm turnin' to you; you're her mother, oh think, think—"

"I'll think no more about it," she replied. "You're mad, an' thank God, we know it. Of coorse it 'ill run in the family, for which reas*ing* my daughter 'ill never be joined to the son of a madman."

He then turned as a last resource to O'Brien himself. "Bodagh, Bodagh, I say;" here his voice rose to a frightful pitch: "I enthrate, I ordher, I command you to listen to me! Marry them; don't kill your daughter, an' don't, don't, don't dare to kill my son. If you do I'll curse you till the marks of your feet will scorch the ground you tread on. Oh," he exclaimed, his voice now sinking, and his reason awaking, apparently from exhaustion, "what is come over me? what am I sayin'? but it's all for my

son, my son." He then sat down, and for more than twenty minutes wept like an infant, and sobbed, and sighed as if his heart would break.

A feeling very difficult to be described hushed his amazed auditory into silence; they felt something like pity toward the unfortunate old man, as well as respect for that affection which struggled with such moral heroism against the frightful vice that attempted to subdue this last surviving virtue in the breast of the miser.

On his getting calm, they spoke to him kindly, but in firm and friendly terms communicated their ultimate determination, that in consequence of his declining to make an adequate provision for his son, the marriage could by no means take place. He then got his hat, and attempted to go to the road which led to the little lawn, but so complete was his abstraction, and so exhausted his faculties, that it was not without John's assistance he could reach the gate which lay before his eyes. He first turned out of the walk to the right, then crossed over to the left, and felt surprised that a wall opposed him in each direction.

"You are too much disturbed," said John, "to perceive the way, but I will show you."

"I suppose I thought it was at home I was," he replied, "bekase at my own house one must turn aither to the right or to the left, as, indeed, I'm in the custom of doin'."

CHAPTER VII.

WHILE Fardorougha was engaged upon this ill-managed mission, his wife, who felt that all human efforts at turning the heart of her husband from his wealth must fail, resolved to have recourse to a higher power. With this purpose in view, she put on her Sunday dress, and informed Connor that she was about to go for a short time from home.

"I'll be back if I can," she added, "before your father comes; and, indeed, it's as good not to let him know anything about it."

"About what, mother? for I know as little about it as he does."

"Why, dear, I'm goin' to get a couple o' masses sed, for God to turn his heart from that cursed *airaghid* it's fixed upon. Sure it houlds sich a hard grip of his poor sowl, that it'll be the destruction of him here an' hereafther. It'll kill him afore his time, an' then I thrimble to think of his chance above."

"The object is a good one, sure enough, an' it bein' for a spiritual purpose, I suppose the priest won't object to it."

"Why would he, dear, an' it for the good of his sowl. Sure, when Pat Lanigan was jealous, his wife got three masses sed for him; an' wid the help of God, he was cured sound an' clane."*

Connor could not help smiling at this extraordinary cure for jealousy, nor at the simple piety of a heart, the strength of whose affection he knew so well. After her

* Strange as it may appear, masses are said for such purposes.

return she informed the son that, in addition to the masses to be said against his father's avarice, she had some notion of getting another said toward his marriage with Una.

"I was goin'," she proceeded, "to slip it in along wid your father's business, but I thought it wouldn't be fair or honest to trick his reverence that way upon the bare price of the two he is to say; for aldhough it 'ud be killin' two birds wid one stone, still it mightn't bring about the match in regard o' the roguery on *my* part."

"God help you, mother," said Connor, laughing; "for I think you one of the innocentest women that ever lived; but whisht!" he added, "here's my father; God grant that he may bring good news!"

When Fardorougha entered he was paler, or rather sallower, than usual; and on his thin puckered face, the lines that marked it were exhibited with a distinctness greater than ordinary. His eyes appeared to have sunk back more deeply into his head; his cheeks had fallen farther into his jaws; his eye was gleamy and disturbed; and his whole appearance bespoke trouble and care, and the traces of a strong and recent struggle within him.

"Father," said Connor, with a beating heart, "for Heaven's sake, what news, what tidings? I trust—I trust in God it's good."

"They have no bowels, Connor; they have no bowels, thim O'Briens."

"Then you didn't succeed?"

"The father's as great a *bodagh* as him he was called after; they're a bad pack, an' you musn't think of any one belongin' to them."

"But tell us, man, dear," said the wife, "what passed; let us know it all."

"Why, they would do nothin'—they wouldn't hear of it. I went on my knees to them; ay, to every one of them, barrin' the colleen herself; but 'twas all no use; it's to be no match."

"And why, father, did you go on your knees to *any* of them?" said Connor; "I'm sorry you did *that*."

"I did it on your account, Connor, an' I'd do it agin on your account, poor boy."

"Well, well, it can't be helped."

"But tell me, Fardorougha," inquired Honor, "was any of the fault your own? what did *you* offer to do for Connor?"

"Let me alone," said he, peevishly; "I won't be crass-questioned about it. My heart's broke among you all; what did *I* offer to do for Connor? The match is knocked up, I tell you, and it must be knocked up. Connor's young, and it'll be time enough for him to marry this seven years to come."

As he said this, the fire of avarice blazed in his eyes, and he looked angrily at Honor, then at the son; but while contemplating the latter, his countenance changed from anger to sorrow, and from sorrow to a mild and serene expression of affection.

"Connor, avick," said he, "Connor, sure you'll not blame *me* in this business? sure you won't blame your poor, heart-broken father, let thim say what they will; sure you won't, avilish?"

"Don't fret on my account, father," said the son; "why should I blame you? God knows you're *strivin'* to do what you would wish for me."

"No, Honor, I knew *he* wouldn't," he shouted, rising up, "he wouldn't make a saycrefize o' me! Connor, save me, save me," he shrieked, throwing his arms about his neck; "save me, my heart's breakin'; somethin's tearin' me different ways inside; I can cry, you see; I can cry, but I'm still as hard as a stone; it's terrible this I'm sufferin'—terrible all out for a weak old man like me. Oh, Connor, avick, what 'ill I do? Honor, achora, what 'll become o' me? amn't I strugglin', strugglin' against it, whatever it is? don't yees pity me? don't ye, avick machree, don't ye, Honor? oh, don't yees pity me?"

"God pity you!" said the wife, bursting into tears; "what will become of you? pray to God, Fardorougha, pray to him. No one alive can change your heart but God. I wint to the priest to-day to get two masses said to turn your heart from that cursed money. I didn't intind to tell you, but I do, bekase it's your duty to pray now, above all times, an' to back the priest as well as you can."

"It's the best advice, father, you could get," said the son, as he helped the trembling old man to his seat.

"An' who bid you, thin, to go to lavish money that way?" said he, turning snappishly to Honor, and relapsing again into the peevish spirit of avarice; "Saver o' Heaven, but you'll kill me, woman, afore you have done wid me. How can I stand it, to have my hard-earned —an' for what? to turn *my* heart from money! I don't want to be turned from it; I don't wish it! Money! I have no money; nothin', nothin'; an' if there's not better decreed for me, I'll be starved yet; an' is it any wondher? to be robbin' me the way you're doin'!"

His wife clasped her hands, and looked up toward heaven in silence, and Connor, shaking his head despairingly, passed out to seek Flanagan, with whom he had not spoken that day. Briefly and with a heavy heart, he communicated to him the unsuccessful issue of his father's interference, and asked his opinion as to how he should conduct himself under circumstances so disastrous to his happiness and prospects. Bartle advised him to seek another interview with Una, and for that purpose offered, as before, to ascertain in the course of that evening at what time and place she would see him. This suggestion, in itself so natural, was adopted; and as Connor felt with peculiar acuteness the pain of the situation in which he was placed, he manifested little tendency to conversation, and the evening, consequently, passed heavily and in silence.

Dusk, however, arrived, and Bartle prepared himself to execute the somewhat difficult commission he had so obligingly undertaken. He appeared, however, to have caught a portion of Connor's despondency, for, when about to set out he said "that he felt his spirits sunk and melancholy; just," he added, "as if some misfortune, Connor, was afore aither or both of us: for my part, I'd stake my life that things will go *ashaughran** one way or other, an' that you'll never call Una O'Brien your wife."

"Bartle," replied the other, "I only want you to do my message, an' not to be prophesyin' ill; bad news comes too soon, without your tellin' us of it aforehand. God knows, Bartle, dear, I'm distressed enough as it is, and want my spirits to be kept up rather than put down."

"No, Connor, but you want somethin' to divart your mind off of this business altogether for a while; an' upon my saunnies, it 'ud be a charity for some friend to give you a fresh piece of fun to think of; so keep up your heart; how do you know but I may do that much for you myself? But I want you to lend me the loan of a pair of shoes; divil a tatther of these will be together soon, barrin' I get them mended in time; you can't begrudge that, any how, an' me wearin' them on your own business."

"Nonsense, man; to be sure I will; stop, an' I'll bring them out to you in half a shake."

He accordingly produced a pair of shoes, nearly new, and told Bartle that if he had no objection to accept of them as a present, he might consider them as his own.

This conversation took place in Fardorougha's barn, where Flanagan always slept, and kept his small deal trunk.

* Astray.

He paused a moment when this good-natured offer was made to him, but as it was dark no particular expression could be discovered on his countenance.

"No!" said he, vehemently; "may I go to perdition if I ought: Connor—Connor O'Donovan, you'd turn the div—"

"Hut, Bartle, don't be angry; when I offered them I didn't mean to give you the slightest offence; it's enough for you to tell me you won't have them without gettin' into a passion."

"Have what? what are you spakin' about?"

"Why, about the shoes; what else?"

"Yes, faith, sure enough; well, ay, the shoes! don't think of it, Conner: I'm hasty; too much so, indeed, an' that's my fault. I'm like all good-natured people in that respect; however, I'll borry them for a day or two, till I get my own patched up some way. But, death alive, why did you get, at this season of the year, three rows of sparables in the soles o' them?" he asked, running his fingers along the soles as he spoke.

"Bekase they last longer, of coorse; and now, Bartle, be off, and don't let the grass grow under your feet till I see you agin."

Connor's patience, or rather his impatience, that night was severely taxed. Hour after hour elapsed, and yet Bartle did not return. At length he went to his father's sleeping room, and informed him of the message he had sent through Flanagan to Una.

"I will sleep in the barn to-night, father," he added; "an' never fear, let us talk as we may, but we'll be up early enough in the morning, plase God. I couldn't sleep, or go to sleep, till I hear what news he brings back to me; so do you rise and secure the door, an' I'll make my shake down wid Bartle for this night."

The father, who never refused him anything *un*pecuniary (if we may be allowed the word), did as the son requested him, and again went to bed, unconscious of

the thunder-cloud which was soon to burst upon them both.

Bartle, however, at length returned, and Connor had the satisfaction of hearing that his faithful Una would meet him the next night, if possible, at the hour of twelve o'clock in her father's haggard. Her parents, Bartle told him, had laid an injunction upon her never to see him again; she was watched, too, and unless when the household were asleep, she found it altogether impracticable to effect any appointment whatsoever with her lover. She could not even promise with certainty to meet him on that night, but she desired him to come, and if she failed to be punctual, not to leave the place of appointment for at least an hour. After that, if she appeared not, then he was to wait no longer. Such was the purport of the message which *Flanagan* delivered him.

Flanagan was the first up the next morning, for the purpose of keeping an appointment which *he* had with Biddy Nulty, whom we have already introduced to the reader. On being taxed with meanness by this weak but honest creature, for having sought service with the man who had ruined his family, he promised to acquaint her with the true motive which had induced him to enter into Fardorougha's employment. Their conversation on this point, however, was merely a love scene, in which Bartle attempted to satisfy her that to an attachment for herself of some months' standing might be ascribed his humiliation in becoming a servant to the oppresser and destroyer of his house. He then passed from themselves and their prospects to Connor and Una O'Brien, with whose affection for each other, as the reader knows, he was first made acquainted by his fellow-servant.

"It's terrible, Biddy," said he, "to think of the black and revengeful heart that Connor bears to Bodagh Buie and his family, merely bekase they refuse to let him marry Una. I'm afeard, Biddy, darlin', that there'll be

dark work about it on Connor's side; an' if you hear of anything bad happenin' to the Bodagh, you'll know where it comes from."

"I don't b'lieve it, Bartle, nor I won't b'lieve it—not, any way, till I hear that it happens. But what is it he intends to do to them?"

"That's more than I know myself," replied Bartle; "I axed as much, an' he said till it was done nobody would be the wiser."

"That's quare," said the girl, "for a bether heart than Connor has God never made."

"You think so, agra, but wait; do you watch, and you'll find that he won't come in to-night. I know nothin' myself of what he's about, for he's as close as his father's purse, an' as deep as a draw-well, ay, an' as fair-faced as the divil, when the ould boy wants to tempt a priest; but this I know, that he has black business on his hands, whatever it is. Be the crass, I tremble to think of it!"

Flanagan then got tender, and after pressing his suit with all the eloquence he was master of, they separated, he to his labour in the fields, and she to her domestic employment, and the unusual task of watching the motions of her master's son.

Flanagan, in the course of the day, suggested to Connor the convenience of sleeping that night *also* in the barn. The time of meeting, he said, was too late, and his father's family, who were early in their hours both night and morning, would be asleep even before they set out. He also added, that lest any of the O'Briens or their retainers should surprise him and Una, he had made up his mind to accompany him, and act as a *vidette* during their interview.

Connor felt this devotion of Bartle to his dearest interests, as every grateful and generous heart would.

"Bartle," said he, "when we are married, if it's ever in my power to make you aisy in life, may I never prosper

if I don't do it; at all evints, in some way I'll reward you."

"If you're ever able, Connor, I'll have no objection to be behouldin' to you: that is, if you're *ever able*, as you say."

"And if their's a just God in heaven, Bartle, who sees my heart, however things may go against me for a time, I say I *will* be able to sarve you, or any other friend that desarves it. But about sleepin' *in* to-night; of coorse I wouldn't be nockin' up my father and disturbin' my poor mother for no rason; so, of coorse, as I said, I'll sleep in the barn: it makes no difference one way or other."

"Conner," said Flanagan, with much solemnity, "if Bodagh Buie's wise, he'll marry you an' his daughter as fast as he can."

"An' why, Bartle?"

"Why, for rasons you know nothin' about. Of late he's got very much out o' favour, in regard of not comin' in to what *people* wish."

"Spake plainer, Bartle; I'm in the dark now."

"There's work goin' on in the counthry, that you and every one like you ought to be *up* to; but you know nothin', as I said, about it. Now Bodagh Buie, as far as I hear—for I'm in the dark myself nearly as much as you—Bodah Buie houlds out against them: an' not only that, I'm tould, but gives them hard words, an' sets them at defiance."

"But what has all this to do with me marrying his daughter?"

"Why, he wants some one badly to stand his friend wid *them*; an' if you were married to her, you would on his account become one o' them; begad, as it is you ought, for, to tell you the truth, there's talk—strong talk too, about payin' him a nightly visit that mayen't sarve him."

"Then, Bartle, *you're* consarned in this business."

"No, faith, not yet; but I suppose I must, if I wish

to be *safe* in the counthry; an' so must you to for the same rason."

"And, if not *up*, how do you know so much about it?"

"From one o' themselves, that wishes the Bodagh well; ay, an' let me tell you, that he's *a marked man*, an' the night was appointed to visit him; still it was put back to thry if he could be managed, but he couldn't; an' all I know about it is that the time to remimber him is settled, an' he's *to get it*, an', long wid other things, he'll be ped for turnin' off—however, I can't say any more about *that*."

"How long is it since you knew this?"

"Not long; only since last night, or you'd 'a got it before this. The best way, I think, to put him on his guard 'ud be to send him a scrape of a line wid no name to it."

"Bartle," replied Connor, "I'm as much behouldin' to you for this, as if it had been myself or my father that was *marked*. God knows you have a good heart, an' if you don't sleep sound, I'm at a loss to know who ought."

"*Ma choirp an' dioul* but it's hard to tell *who* has a good heart, Connor; I'd never say any one has till I'd see them well thried."

At length the hour for setting out arrived, and both, armed with good oaken cudgels, proceeded to Bodagh Buie's haggard, whither they arrived a little before the appointed hour. An utter stillness prevailed round the place; not a dog barked; not a breeze blew, nor did a leaf move on its stem, so calm and warm was the night. Neither moon nor stars shone in the firmament, and the darkness seemed kindly to throw its dusky mantle over this sweet and stolen interview of our young lovers. As yet, however, Una had not come, nor could Connor, on surveying the large massy farmhouse of the Bodagh, perceive any appearance of light, or hear a single sound, however faint, to break the stillness in which it slept. Bartle, immediately after their arrival in the haggard, separated from his companion, in order, he said, to give

notice of interruption, should Una be either watched or followed.

"Besides, you know," he added, "sweethearts like nobody to be present but themselves, when they do be speakin' soft to one another. So I'll just keep dodgin' about, from place to place, wid my eye an' ear both open, an' if any intherloper comes I'll give yees the hard word."

Heavily and lazily creep those moments during which an impatient lover awaits the approach of his mistress; and wo betide the wooer of impetuous temperament who is doomed, like our hero, to watch a whole hour and a half in vain. Many a theory did his fancy body forth, and many a conjecture did he form as to the probable causes of her absence. Was it possible that they watched her even in the dead hour of night? Perhaps the grief she felt at her father's refusal to sanction the match had brought on indisposition; and, oh, harrowing thought! perhaps they had succeeded in prevailing upon her to renounce him and his hopes for ever. But no; their affection was too pure and steadfast to admit of a supposition so utterly unreasonable. What, then, could have prevented her from keeping an appointment so essential to their future prospects, and to the operations necessary for them to pursue? Some plan of intercourse, some settled mode of communication, must be concerted between them, a circumstance the necessity of which was as well known to herself as to him.

"Well, well," thought he, "whatever's the reason of her not comin', I'm sure the fault is not hers; at all events, there's no use in waitin' this night any longer."

Flanagan, it appeared, was of the same opinion, for in a minute or two he made his appearance, and urged their return home. It was clear, he said, that no interview *could* take place that night, and the sooner they reached the barn and got to bed the better.

"Folly me," he added; "we can pass through the yard,

cross the road before the hall-door, and get over the stile, by the near way through the fields that's behind the orchard."

Connor, who was by no means so well acquainted with the path as his companion, followed him in the way pointed out, and in a few minutes they found themselves walking at a brisk pace in a direction that led homeward by a shorter cut. Connor's mind was too much depressed for conversation, and both were proceeding in silence, when Flanagan started in alarm, and pointed out the figure of some one walking directly toward them. In less than a minute the person, whoever he might be, had come within speaking distance, and, as he shouted out "who comes there?" Flanagan bolted across the ditch along which they had been going, and disappeared.

"A friend," returned Connor, in answer to the question.

The other man advanced, and with a look of deep scrutiny peered into his face. "A friend," he exclaimed; "faith, it's a quare hour for a friend to be out. Who are you, eh? Is this Connor O'Donovan?"

"It is: but you have the advantage of me."

"If your father was here he would know Phil Curtis, any way."

"I ought to 'a known the voice myself," said Connor; "Phil, how are you? an' what's bringing *yourself* out at this hour?"

"Why, I want to buy a couple o' milch cows in the fair o' Kilturbit, an' I'm goin' to catch my horse an' make ready. It's a stiff ride from this, an' by the time I'm there it'ill be late enough for business, I'm thinkin'. There was some one wid ye; who was it?"

"Come, come," said Connor, good-humouredly, "he was out coortin', and doesn't wish to be known; and, Phil, as you *had* the luck to meet me, I beg you, for Heaven's sake, not to breathe that you seen me near Bodagh Burie's to-night; I have various rasons for it."

"It's no sacret to me as it is," replied Curtis; "half the parish knows it; so make your mind asy on that head.

Good night, Connor! I wish you success, any how; you'll be a happy man if you get her; although, from what I hear has happened, you have a bad chance, except herself stands to you."

The truth was, that Fardorougha's visit to the Bodagh, thanks to the high tones of his own shrill voice, had drawn female curiosity, already suspicious of the circumstances, to the keyhole of the parlour-door, where the issue and object of the conference soon became known. In a short time it had gone among the servants, and from them was transmitted, in the course of that and the following day, to the tenants and day labourers, who contrived to multiply it with such effect, that, as Curtis said, it was indeed no secret to the greater part of the parish.

Flanagan soon rejoined Connor, who, on taxing him with his flight, was informed, with an appearance of much regret, that a debt of old standing due to Curtis had occasioned it.

"And upon my saunnies, Connor, I'd rather any time go up to my neck in wather than meet a man that I owe money to, whin I can't pay him. I knew Phil very well, even before he spoke, and that was what made me cut an' run."

"What!" said Connor, looking toward the east, "can it be daylight so soon?"

"Begad, it surely cannot," replied his companion "Holy mother above, what is this?"

Both involuntarily stood to contemplate the strange phenomenon which presented itself to their observation; and as it was certainly both novel and startling in its appearance, we shall pause a little to describe it more minutely.

The night, as we have already said, was remarkably dark, and warm to an unusual degree. To the astonishment, however, of our travellers, a gleam of light, extremely faint, and somewhat resembling that which precedes the rising of the summer sun, broke upon their path, and passed on in undulating sweeps for a considerable space

before them. Connor had scarcely time to utter the exclamation just alluded to, and Flanagan to reply to him, when the light around them shot farther into the distance, and deepened from its first pale hue into a rich and gorgeous purple. Its effect, however, was limited within a circle of about a mile, for they could observe that it got faint gradually from the centre to the extreme verge, where it melted into utter darkness.

"This must mean something extraordinary," said Connor; "whatever it is, it appears to be behind the hill that divides us from Bodagh Buie's house. Blessed earth! it looks as if the sky was on fire!"

The sky, indeed, presented a fearful but sublime spectacle. One spot appeared to glow with the red white heat of a furnace, and to form the centre of a fiery cupola, from which the flame was flung in redder and grosser masses, that darkened away into wild and dusky indistinctness, in a manner that corresponded with the same light, as it danced in red and frightful mirth upon the earth. As they looked, the cause of this awful phenomenon soon became visible. From behind the hill was seen a thick shower of burning particles rushing up into the mid air, and presently the broad point of a huge pyramid of fire, wavering in terrible and capricious power, seemed to disport itself far up in the depths of the glowing sky. On looking again upon the earth, they perceived that this terrible circle was extending itself over a wider circumference of country, marking every prominent object around them with a dark blood-red tinge, and throwing those that were more remote into a visionary but appalling relief.

"*Dhar Chriestha*," exclaimed Flanagan, "I have it; *thim* I spoke about has paid Bodagh Buie the visit they promised him."

"Come round the hip o' the hill," said Connor, "till we see where it really is; but I'll tell you what, Bartle, if you be right, wo betide you; all the water in Europe wouldn't wash you free in my mind of bein' connected

in this same riband business that's spread through the country. As sure as that sky—that fearful sky's above us, you must prove to me an' others how you came to know that this hellish business was to take place. God of heaven! let us run; surely it couldn't be the dwelling-house!"

His speed was so great that Bartle could find neither breath nor leisure to make any reply.

"Thank God," he exclaimed; "oh, thank God, it's not the house, and their lives are safe; but, blessed Father, there's the man's whole haggard in flames!"

"Oh, the *netarnal* villains!" was the simple exclamation of Flanagan.

"Bartle," said his companion, "you heard what I said this minute?"

Their eyes met as he spoke, and, for the first time, O'Donovan was struck by the pallid malignity of his features. The servant gazed steadily upon him, his lips lightly but firmly drawn back, and his eye, in which was neither sympathy nor alarm, charged with the spirit of a cool and devilish triumph.

Connor's blazed at the bare idea of his villany, and, in a fit of manly and indignant rage, he seized Flanagan and hurled him headlong to the earth at his feet. "You have hell in your face, you villain," he exclaimed, "an' if I thought that—if I did—I'd drag you down like a dog, and pitch you head foremost into the flames."

Bartle rose, and in a voice wonderfully calm, simply observed, "God knows, Connor, if I know either your heart or mine, you'll be sorry for this tratement you've given me for no rason. You know yourself, that, as soon as I heard anything of the ill-will aginst the Bodagh, I tould it to you, in ordher, mark that, in ordher that you might let *him* know it the best way you thought proper, an' for *that* you've knocked me down!"

"Why, I believe you may be right, Bartle, there's truth in that; but I can't forgive you the *look* you gave me."

"That red light was in my face, maybe; I'm sure if that wasn't it, I can't tell; I was myself wondherin' at your own looks, the same way; but then it was that quare light that was in your face."

"Well, well, maybe I'm wrong; I hope I am. Do you think we could be of any use there?"

"Of use! an' how would we account for bein' there at all, Connor? how would *you* do it, at any rate, widout, maybe, bringing the girl into blame?"

"You're right agin, Bartle; I'm not half so cool as you are; our best plan is to go home—"

"And go to bed; it is; an' the sooner we're there the betther; sowl, Connor, you gev me a murdherin' crack."

"Think no more of it, think no more of it; I'm not often hasty, so you must overlook it."

It was, however, with an anxious and distressed heart that Connor O'Donovan reached his father's barn, where, in the same bed with Flanagan, he enjoyed, toward morning, a brief and broken slumber that brought back to his fancy images of blood and fire, all so confusedly mingled with Una, himself, and their parents, that the voice of his father, calling upon them to rise, came to him as a welcome and manifest relief.

At the time laid in this story, neither burnings nor murders were so familiar or *patriotic* as the fancied necessity for working out political purposes has recently made them. Such atrocities, in those bad and unreformed days, were certainly looked upon as criminal rather than meritorious, however *un*patriotic it may have been to form so erroneous an estimate of human villany. The consequence of all this was, that the destruction of Bodagh Buie's property created a sensation in the country, of which, familiarized as *we* are to such crimes, we can entertain but a very faint notion. In three days a reward of five hundred pounds, exclusive of two hundred from government, was offered for such information as might bring the incendiary, or incendiaries, to justice. The Bodagh and his family were stunned as much with

amazement at the occurrence of a calamity so incomprehensible to them, as with the loss they had sustained, for that indeed was heavy. The man, except with the Ribandmen, was extremely popular, and, by many acts of kindness, had won the attachment and good-will of all who knew him, either personally or by character. How then account for an act so wanton and vindictive? They could not understand it; it was not only a crime, but a crime connected with some mysterious motive, beyond their power to detect.

But of all who became acquainted with the outrage, not one sympathized more sincerely and deeply with O'Brien's family than did Connor O'Donovan; although, of course, that sympathy was unknown to those for whom it was felt. The fact was, that his own happiness became in some degree involved in their calamity; and, as he came in to breakfast on the fourth morning after its occurrence, he could not help observing as much to his mother. His suspicions of Flanagan, as to possessing some clew to the melancholy business, were by no means removed. On the contrary, he felt that he ought to have him brought before the bench of magistrates who were conducting the investigation from day to day, and, with this determination, he himself resolved to state fully and candidly to the bench all the hints which had transpired from Flanagan respecting the denunciations said to be held out against O'Brien, and the causes assigned for them. Breakfast was now ready, and Fardorougha himself entered, uttering petulant charges of neglect and idleness against his servant.

"He desarves *no* breakfast," said he; "not a morsel; it's robbing me by his idleness and schaming he is. What is he doin', Connor? or what has become of him? He's not in the field or about the place."

Connor paused.

"Why, now that I think of it, I didn't see him to-day," he replied; "I thought he was mendin' the slap at the Three-acres. I'll thry if he's in the barn."

And he went accordingly to find him. "I'm afraid, father," said he, on his return, "that Bartle's a bad boy, an' a dangerous one; he's not in the barn, an' it appears, from the bed, that he didn't sleep there last night. The thruth is, he's gone; at laste he has brought all his clothes, his box, an' everything with him; an' what's more, I suspect the rason of it; he thinks he has let out too much to me; an' *dhar ma chorp*,* it'ill go hard but I'll make him let out more."

The servant-maid, Biddy, now entered, and informed them that four men, evidently strangers, were approaching the house from the rear, and ere she could add anything farther on the subject, two of them walked in, and seizing Connor, informed him that he was their prisoner.

"Your prisoner!" exclaimed his mother, getting pale; "why, what could our poor boy do to make him your prisoner? He never did hurt or harm to the child unborn."

Fardorougha's keen gray eye rested sharply upon them for a moment; it then turned to Honor, afterward to Connor, and again gleamed bitterly at the intruders. "What is this?" said he, starting up; "what is this? you don't mane to rob us?"

"I think," said the son, "you must be under a mistake; you surely can have no business with *me*. It's very likely you want some one else."

"What is your name?" inquired he who appeared to be the principal of them.

"My name is Connor O'Donovan; an' I know no rason why I should deny it."

"Then you are the very man we came for," said the querist; "so you had better prepare to accompany us; in the mean time you must excuse us if we search your room. This is unpleasant, I grant, but we have no discretion, and must perform our duty."

* By my body.

"What do you want in his room?" said Fardorougha; "it's robbery you're on for—it's robbery you're on for—in open daylight, too; but you're late; I lodged the last penny yesterday; that's one comfort; you're late—you're late."

"What did my boy do?" exclaimed the affrighted mother; "what did he do, that you come to drag him away from us?"

This question she put to the other constable, the first having entered her son's bedroom.

"I am afraid, madam, you'll know it too soon," replied the man; "it's a heavy charge, if it proves to be a true one."

As he spoke, his companion re-entered the apartment with Connor's Sunday coat in his hand, from the pocket of which he drew a steel and tinder-box.

"I'm sorry for this," he observed; "it corroborates what has been sworn against you by your accomplice, and here I fear comes additional proof."

At the same moment the other two made their appearance, one of them holding in his hand the shoes which Connor had lent to Flanagan, and which he wore on the night of the conflagration.

On seeing this, and comparing the two circumstances together, a fearful light broke on the unfortunate young man, who already felt conscious of the snare into which he had fallen. With an air of sorrow and manly resignation he thus addressed his parents:

"Don't be alarmed; I see that there is an attempt made to swear away my life; but whatever happens, you both know that I am innocent of doin' an injury to any one. If I die, I would rather die innocent than live as guilty as he will that must have my blood to answer for."

His mother, on hearing this, ran to him, and with her arms about his neck, exclaimed,

"Die! die! Connor darlin'—my brave boy—my only son; why do you talk about death? what is it for? what

is it about? Oh, for the love of God tell us what did our boy do?"

"He is charged by Bartle Flanagan," replied one of the constables, "with burning Bodagh Buie O'Brien's haggard because he refused him his daughter. He must now come with us to jail."

"I see the whole plot," said Connor, "and a deep one it is; the villain will do his worst; still I can't but have dependence upon justice and my own innocence. I can't but have dependence upon God, who knows my heart."

CHAPTER VIII.

FARDOROUGHA stood amazed and confounded, looking from one to another like a man who felt incapable of comprehending all that passed before him. His forehead, over which fell a few gray thin locks, assumed a deadly paleness, and his eye lost the piercing expression which usually characterized it. He threw his *cothamore* several times over his shoulders, as he had been in the habit of doing when about to proceed after breakfast to his usual avocations, and as often laid it aside, without being at all conscious of what he did. His limbs appeared to get feeble, and his hands trembled as if he laboured under palsy. In this mood he passed from one to another, sometimes seizing a constable by the arm with a hard, tremulous grip, and again suddenly letting go his hold of him without speaking. At length a singular transition from this state of mind became apparent; a gleam of wild exultation shot from his eye; his sallow and blasted features brightened; the *cothamore* was buttoned under his chin with a rapid energy of manner, evidently arising from the removal of some secret apprehension.

"Then," he exclaimed, "it's no robbery; it's no robbery; it's no robbery afther all; but how could it? there's no money here; not a penny; an' I'm belied at any rate; for there's not a poorer man in the barony—thank God, it's not *robbery*."

"Oh, Fardorougha," said the wife, "don't you see they're goin' to take him away from us!"

"Take who away from us?"

"Connor, your own Connor; our boy; the light of

my heart; the light of his poor mother's heart! Oh, Connor, Connor, what is it they're goin' to do to you?"

"No harm, mother, I trust; no harm; don't be frightened."

The old man put his open hands to his temples, which he pressed bitterly, and with all his force, for nearly half a minute. He had, in truth, been alarmed into the very worst mood of his habitual vice, apprehension concerning his money; and felt that nothing except a powerful effort could succeed in drawing his attention to the scene which was passing before him.

"What," said he; "what is it that's wrong wid Connor?"

"He must come to jail," said one of the men, looking at him with surprise; "we have already stated the crime for which he stands committed."

"To jail! Connor O'Donovan to jail!"

"It's too true, father; Bartle Flanagan has sworn that I burned Mr. O'Brien's haggard."

"Connor, Connor," said the old man, approaching him as he spoke, and putting his arms composedly about his neck, "Connor, my brave boy, my brave boy, it wasn't you did it; 'twas I did it," he added, turning to the constables; "lave him, lave him with her, an' take me in his place! Who would if I would not? who ought, I say? an' I'll do it; take me; I'll go in his place."

Connor looked down upon the old man, and as he saw his heart rent, and his reason absolutely tottering, a sense of the singular and devoted affection which he had ever borne him overcame him, and with a full heart he dashed away a tear from his eye, and pressed his father to his breast.

"Mother," said he, "this will kill the old man; it will kill him!"

"Fardorougha, ahagur," said his wife, feeling it necessary to sustain him as much as possible, "don't take it so much to heart, it won't signify; Connor's innocent, an' no harm will happen him."

"But are you lavin' us, Connor? are they—must they bring you to jail?"

"For a while, father; but I won't be long there, I hope."

"It's an unpleasant duty on our part," said the principal of them; "still it's one we must perform. Your father should lose no time in taking the proper steps for your defence."

"And what are we to do?" asked the mother; "God knows the boy's as innocent as I am."

"Yes," said Fardorougha, still dwelling upon the resolution he had made; "*I'll* stand for you, Connor; you won't go; let them bring *me* instead of you."

"That's out of the question," replied the constable; "the law suffers nothing of the kind to take place; but if you be advised by me, lose no time in preparing to defend him. It would be unjust to disguise the matter from you, or to keep you ignorant of its being a case of life and death."

"Life and death! what do you mane?" asked Fardorougha, staring vacantly at the last speaker.

"It's painful to distress you; but if he's found guilty, its death."

"Death! hanged!" shrieked the old man, awaking as it were for the first time to a full perception of his son's situation; "hanged! my boy hanged! Connor, Connor, don't go from me!"

"I'll die with him," said the mother; "I'll die with you, Connor. We couldn't live widout him," she added, addressing the strangers; "as God is in heaven we couldn't! Oh Connor, Connor, avourneen, what is it that has come over us, and brought us to this sorrow?"

The mother's grief then flowed on, accompanied by a burst of that unstudied, but pathetic eloquence, which in Ireland is frequently uttered in the tone of wail and lamentation peculiar to those who mourn over the dead.

"No," she added, with her arms tenderly about him,

and her streaming eyes fixed with a wild and mournful look of despair upon his face; "no, he is in his loving mother's arms, the boy that never gave to his father or me a harsh word or a sore heart! Long were we lookin' for him, an' little did we think that it was for this heavy fate that the goodness of God sent him to us! Oh many a look of lovin' affection, many a happy heart did he give us! Many a time, Connor, avillish, did I hang over your cradle, and draw out to myself the happiness and the good that I hoped was before you. You wor too good; too good, I doubt, to be long in such a world as this; an' no wondher, that the heart of the fair young colleen, the heart of the colleen *dhas dhun*, should rest upon you and love you; for who ever knew you that didn't? Isn't there enough, King of Heaven! enough of the bad an' the wicked in this world for the law to punish, an' not to take the innocent; not to take away from us the only one, *the only one;* I can't—I can't—but ift hey do—Connor—if they do, your lovin' mother will die with you!"

The stern officers of justice wiped their eyes, and were proceeding to afford such consolation as they could, when Fardorougha, who had sat down after having made way for Honor to recline on the bosom of their son, now rose, and seizing the breast of his coat, was about to speak, but ere he could utter a word he tottered, and would have instantly fallen, had not Connor caught him in his arms. This served for a moment to divert the mother's grief, and to draw her attention from the son to the husband, who was now insensible. He was carried to the door by Connor; but when they attempted to lay him in a recumbent posture, it was found almost impossible to unclasp the death-like grip which he held of the coat. His haggard face was shrunk and collapsed; the individual features sharp and thin, but earnest and stamped with traces of alarm; his brows, too, which were slightly knit, gave to his whole countenance a character of keen and painful determination. But that which

struck those who were present most, was the unyielding grasp with which he clung even in his insensibility to the person of Connor.

If not an affecting sight, it was one at least strongly indicative of the intractable and indurated attachment which put itself forth with such vague and illusive energy on behalf of his son. At length he recovered, and on opening his eyes he fixed them with a long look of pain and distraction upon the boy's countenance.

"Father," said Connor, "don't be cast down; you need not; and you ought not to be so much disheartened; do you feel better?"

When the father heard his voice he smiled; yes, his shrunk, pale, withered face was lighted up by a wild, indescribable ecstasy, whose startling expression was borrowed, one would think, as much from the light of insanity as from that of returning consciousness. He sucked in his thin cheeks, smacked his parched skinny lips, and with difficulty called for a drink. Having swallowed a little water, he looked round him with more composure, and inquired,

"What has happened me? am I robbed? are you robbers? But I tell you there's no money in the house. I lodged the last penny yestherday; afore my God I did; but—oh what am I sayin'? what is this, Connor?"

"Father, dear, compose yourself; we'll get over this throuble."

"We will, darlin'," said Honor, wiping the pale brows of her husband; "an' we won't lose him."

"No, achora," said the old man; "no, we won't lose him! Connor!"

"Well, father dear!

"There's a thing here; here"—and he placed his hand upon his heart; "something it is that makes me afeard; a sinkin'—a weight—and there's a strugglin', too, Connor. I know I can't stand it long; an' it's about you—it's *all* about *you*."

"You distress yourself too much, father; indeed you

do. Why I hoped that you would comfort my poor mother till I come back to her and you, as I will, plase God."

"Yes," he replied; "yes, I will, I will."

"You had better prepare," said one of the officers to Connor; "the sooner this is over the better; he's a feeble man, and not very well able to bear it."

"You are right," said Connor; "I won't delay many minutes; I have only to change my clothes, an' I'm ready."

In a short time he made his appearance dressed in his best suit; and, indeed, it would be extremely difficult to meet, in any rank of life, a finer specimen of vigour, activity, and manly beauty. His countenance, at all times sedate and open, was on this occasion shaded by an air of profound melancholy that gave a composed grace and dignity to his whole bearing.

"Now, father," said he, "before I go, I think it right to lave you and my poor mother all the consolation I can. In the presence of God, in yours, in my dear mother's, and in the presence of all who hear me, I am as innocent of the crime that's laid to my charge as the babe unborn. That's a comfort for you to know, and let it prevent you from frettin'; and now, good-by; God be with you, and strengthen and support you both!"

Fardorougha had already seized his hand; but the old man could neither speak nor weep; his whole frame appeared to have been suddenly pervaded by a dry agony that suspended the beatings of his very heart. The mother's grief, on the contrary, was loud, and piercing, and vehement. She threw herself once more on his neck; she kissed his lips, she pressed him to her heart, and poured out as before the wail of a wild and hopeless misery. At length, by the aid of some slight but necessary force, her arms were untwined about his neck; and Connor, then stooping, embraced his father, and gently placing him upon a settle bed, bade him farewell! On reaching the door he paused, and, turning about, surveyed his mother struggling in the hands of one of the offi-

cers to get embracing him again, and his gray-haired father sitting in speechless misery on the settle. He stood a moment to look upon them, and a few bitter tears rolled, in the silence of manly sorrow, down his cheeks.

"Oh, Fardorougha," exclaimed his mother, after they had gone, "sure it isn't merely for partin' wid him that we feel so heart-broken. He may never stand under this roof again, an' he all we have and had to love!"

"No," returned Fardorougha, quietly, "no, it's not, as you say, for merely partin' wid him—hanged! God! God! *him*—here—Honor—here the thought of it—I'll die—it'll break—oh God, support me! my heart—here—my heart 'ill break! My brain, too, and my head—oh! if God 'ud take me before I'd see it! But it can't be—it's not possible, that our innocent boy should meet sich a death!"

"No, dear, it is not; sure he's innocent, that's one comfort; but, Fardorougha, as the men said, you must go to a lawyer and see what can be done to defind him."

The old man rose up and proceeded to his son's bedroom.

"Honor," said he, "come here;" and while uttering these words he gazed upon her face with a look of unutterable and helpless distress; "there's his bed, Honor, *his* bed; he may never sleep on it more; he may be cut down like a flower in his youth, and then what will become of us?"

"For ever, from this day out," said the distracted mother, "no hands will ever make it but my own; on no other will I sleep; where *his* head lay there will mine be too, avick machree, machree! Och, Fardorougha, we can't stand this; let us not take it to heart, as we do; let us trust in God, an' hope for the best."

Honor, in fact, found it necessary to assume the office of the comforter; but it was clear that nothing urged or suggested by her could for a moment win back the old man's heart from a contemplation of the loss of his son.

He moped about for a considerable time; but, ever and anon, found himself in Connor's bedroom, looking upon his clothes and such other memorials of him as it contained.

During the occurrence of these melancholy incidents at Fardorougha's, others of a scarcely less distressing character were passing under the roof of Bodagh Buie O'Brien.

Our readers need not be informed that the charge brought by Bartle Flanagan against Connor excited the utmost amazement in all who heard it. So much at variance were his untarnished reputation and amiable manners with a disposition so dark and malignant as that which must have prompted the perpetration of such a crime, that it was treated at first by the public as an idle rumour. The evidence, however, of Phil Curtis, and his deposition to the conversation which occurred between him and Connor at the time and place already known to the reader, together with the corroborating circumstances arising from the correspondence of the foot-prints about the haggard with the shoes produced by the constable, all, when combined together, left little doubt of his guilt. No sooner had this impression become general, than the spirit of the father was immediately imputed to the son, and many sagacious observations made, all tending to show, that, as they expressed it, "the bad drop of the old rogue would sooner or later come out in the young one;" "he wouldn't be what he was, or the bitter heart of the miser would appear;" with many other apothegms of a similar import. The family of the Bodagh, however, were painfully and peculiarly circumstanced. With the exception of Una herself, none of them entertained a doubt that Connor was the incendiary. Flanagan had maintained a good character, and his direct impeachment of Connor, supported by such exact circumstantial evidence, left nothing to be urged in the young man's defence. Aware as they were of the force of Una's attachment, and apprehensive that the shock arising from the discovery of

his atrocity might be dangerous if injudiciously disclosed to her, they themselves resolved, in accordance with the suggestion of their son, to break the matter to her with the utmost delicacy and caution.

"It is better," said John, "that she should hear of the misfortune from us; for after breaking it to her as gently as possible, we can at least attempt to strengthen and console her under it."

"Heaven above sees," exclaimed his mother, "that it was a black and unlucky business to her and to all of us; but now that she knows what a revingeful villain he is, I'm sure she'll not find it hard to banish him out of her thoughts. *Deah Grasthias** for the escape she had from him, at any rate!"

"John, bring her in," said the father; "bring the unfortunate young creature in. I can't but pity her, Bridget; I can't but pity *ma colleen voghth*."†

When Una entered with her brother she perceived, by a glance at the solemn bearing of her parents, that some unhappy announcement was about to be made to her. She sat down, therefore, with a beating heart and a cheek already pale with apprehension.

"Una," said her father, "we sent for you to mention a circumstance that we would rather you should hear from ourselves than from strangers. You were always a good girl, Una, an obadient girl, and sensible beyant your years; and I trust that your good sinse and the grace of the Almighty will enable you to bear up undher any disappointment that may come upon you."

"Surely, father, there can be nothing worse than I know already," she replied.

"Why, what *do* you know, dear?"

"Only what you tould me the day Fardorougha was here, that nothing agreeable to my wishes could take place."

"I would give a great deal that the business was now

* Thanks be to God.
† My poor girl.

as it was even then," responded her father; "there's far worse to come, Una, an' you must be firm an' prepare to hear what'll thry you sorely."

"I can't guess it, father; but for God's sake, tell me at once."

"Who do you think burned our property?"

"And I suppose if *she* hadn't been undher the one roof wid us that it's ourselves he'd burn," observed her mother.

"Father, tell me the worst at once, whatever it may be; how could *I* guess the villain or villains who destroyed our property?"

"Villain, indeed; you may well say so," returned the Bodagh. "That villain is no other than Connor O'Donovan."

Una felt as if a weighty burden had been removed from her heart; she breathed freely; her depression and alarm vanished, and her dark eye kindled into a proud confidence in the integrity of her lover.

"And, father," she asked, in a full and firm voice, "is there nothing worse than *that* to come?"

"Worse! is the girl's brain turned?"

"*Dhar a Lhora Heena*, she's as mad, I believe, as ould Fardorougha himself," said her mother; "*worse!* why, she has parted wid all the little reas*in*g she ever had."

"Indeed, mother, I hope I have not, and that my reason's clear as ever; but as to Connor O'Donovan, he's innocent of that charge, and of every other that may be brought against him; I don't believe it, and I never will."

"It's proved against him; it's brought home to him."

"Who is his accuser?"

"His father's servant, Bartle Flanagan, has turned king's evidence."

"The deep-dyed villain!" she exclaimed with indignation: "father, of that crime, so sure as God's in heaven, so sure is Connor O'Donovan innocent, and so sure is Bartle Flanagan guilty, I know it."

"*You* know it—explain yourself."

"I mean *I feel it*—ay, home to the core of my heart, my unhappy heart; I feel the truth of what I say."

"Una," observed her brother, "I'm afraid you have been vilely deceived by him—there's not the slightest doubt of his guilt."

"Don't you be deceived, John; I say he's innocent, as I hope for heaven he's innocent; and, father, I'm not a bit cast down or disheartened by anything I have yet heard against him."

"You're a very extraordinary girl, Una; but, for my part, I'm glad you look upon it as you do. If his innocence appears, no man alive will be better pleased at it than myself."

"His innocence *will* appear," exclaimed the faithful girl: "it must appear; and, father, mark this: I say, time will yet tell who is innocent and who is guilty. God knows," she added, her energy of manner increasing, while a shower of hot tears fell down her cheeks, "God knows I would marry him to-morrow with the disgrace of that and ten times as much upon him, so certain am I that his heart and his hand are free from thought or deed that's either treacherous or dishonourable."

"Marry him," said her mother, loosing temper. "Nobody doubts but you'd marry him on the gallows, wid the rope about his neck."

"I would do it, and unite myself to a true heart. Don't mistake me, and, mother dear, don't blame me," she added, her tears flowing still faster; "he's in disgrace, sunk in shame and sorrow, and I won't conceal the force of what I feel for him; I won't desert him now as the world will do; I know his heart, and on the scaffold to-morrow I would become his wife, if it would take away one atom of his misery."

"If he's innocent,"' said her father, "you have more pinetration than any girl in Europe; but if he's guilty of such an act against any one connected with you, Una, the guilt of all the divils in hell is no match for his. Well,

you have heard all we wanted to say to you, and you needn't stay."

"As she herself says," observed John, "perhaps time will place everything in its true light. At present all those who are not in love with him have little doubt of his guilt. However, even as it is, in principle, Una is right: putting love out of the question, we should prejudge no one."

"Time will," said his sister, "or rather God will in his own good time. On God I'm sure *he* depends; on his providence I also rely for seeing his name and character cleared of all that has been brought against him. John, I wish to speak to you in my own room; not that I intend to make any secret of it, but I want to consult with you first."

"*Cheerna dheelish*," exclaimed her mother; "what a wife that child would make to any one that desarved her!"

"It's more than I'm able to do, to be angry with her," returned the Bodagh. "Did you ever know her to tell a lie, Bridget?"

"A lie! no, nor the shadow of a lie never came out of her lips; the desate's not in her, an' may God look down on her with compunction this day; for there's a dark road I doubt before her!"

"Amen," responded her father: "amen, I pray the Saviour. At all evints, O'Donovan's guilt or innocence will soon be known," he added; "the 'sizes begin this day week, so that the business will soon be over either one way or other."

Una, on reaching her own room, thus addressed her affectionate brother:

"Now, John, you know that my grandfather left me four hundred guineas in his will, and you know, too, the impossibility of getting any money out of the clutches of Fardorougha. You must see Connor, and find out how he intends to defend himself. If his father won't allow him sufficient means to employ the best lawyers—as I

doubt whether he will or not—just tell him the truth, that while I have a penny of these four hundred guineas, he mustn't want money; an' tell him too, that all the world won't persuade me that he's guilty; say I know him to be innocent, and that his disgrace has made him dearer to me than ever he was before."

"Surely you can't suppose for a moment, my dear Una, that I, your brother, who, by the way, have never opened my lips to him, could deliberately convey such a message."

"It must be conveyed in some manner; I'm resolved on that."

"The best plan," said the other, "is to find out whatsoever attorney they employ, and then to discover, if possible, whether his father has furnished sufficient funds for his defence. If he has, your offer is unnecessary; and if not, a private arrangement may be made with the attorney, of which nobody else need know anything."

"God bless you, John; God bless you," she replied; "that is far better; you have been a good brother to your poor Una—to your poor, unhappy Una."

She leaned her head on the table, and wept for some time at the trying fate, as she termed it, which hung over two beings so young and so guiltless of any crime. The brother soothed her by every argument in his power, and after gently compelling her to dry her tears, expressed his intention of going early the next day to ascertain whether or not any professional man had been engaged to conduct the defence of her unfortunate lover.

In effecting this object, there was little time lost on the part of young O'Brien. Knowing that two respectable attorneys lived in the next market town, he deemed it best to ascertain whether Fardorougha had applied to either of them for the purposes afore-mentioned, or if not, to assure himself whether the old man had gone to any of those pettifoggers, who, rather than appear without practice, will undertake a cause almost on any terms, and

afterward institute a lawsuit for the recovery of a much larger bill of costs than a man of character and experience would demand.

In pursuance of the plan concerted between them, the next morning found him rapping, about eleven o'clock, at the door of an attorney named O'Halloran, whom he asked to see on professional business. A clerk, on hearing his voice in the hall, came out and requested him to step into a back room, adding, that his master, who was engaged, would see him the moment he had despatched the person then with him. Thus shown, he was separated from O'Halloran's office only by a pair of folding-doors, through which every word uttered in the office could be distinctly heard; a circumstance that enabled O'Brien unintentionally to overhear the following dialogue between the parties:

"Well, my good friend," said O'Halloran to the stranger, who, it appeared, had arrived before O'Brien only a few minutes, "I am now disengaged; pray, let me know your business."

The stranger paused a moment, as if seeking the most appropriate terms in which to express himself.

"It is a black business," he replied, "and the worst of it is, I'm a poor man."

"You should not go to law then," observed the attorney. "I tell you beforehand you will find it very expensive."

"I know it," said the man; "it's open robbery; I know what it cost me to recover the little pences that wor sometimes due to me, when I broke myself lending weeny thrifles to strugglin' people that I thought honest, an' robbed me afterward."

"In what way can my services be of use to you at present? for that, I suppose, is the object of your calling upon me," said O'Halloran.

"Oh thin, sir, if you have the grace of God, or kindness, or pity in your heart, you can sarve me, you can save my heart from breakin'!"

"How, how, man? come to the point."

"My son, sir, Connor; my only son was taken away from his mother an' me, an' put into jail yestherday mornin', an' he innocent; he was put in, sir, for burnin' Bodagh Buie O'Brien's haggard, an' as God is above me, he as much burnt it as you did."

"Then you are Fardorougha Donovan," said the attorney; "I have heard of that outrage; and to be plain with you, a good deal about yourself. How, in the name of Heaven, can you call yourself a poor man?"

"They belie me, sir; they're bitter inemies that say I'm otherwise."

"Be you rich or be you poor, let me tell you that I would not stand in your son's situation for the wealth of the king's exchequer. Sell your last cow; your last coat; your last acre; sell the bed from under you, without loss of time, if you wish to save his life; and I tell you that for this purpose you must employ the best counsel, and plenty of them. The assizes commence on this day week, so that you have not a single moment to lose. Think now whether you love your son or your money best."

"Saver of earth, amn't I an unhappy man! every one sayin' I have money, an' me has not! Where would I get it? Where would a man like me get it? Instead o' that, I'm so poor that I see plainly I'll starve yet; I see it's before me! God pity me this day! But, agin, there's my boy, my boy; oh God, pity him! Say what's the laste, the lowest, the very lowest you could take for defendin' him; an' for pity's sake, for charity's sake, for God's sake, don't grind a poor, helpless ould man by extortion. If you knew the boy—if you knew him—oh, afore my God, if you knew him, you wouldn't be apt to charge a penny; you'd be proud to sarve sich a boy."

"You wish everything possible to be done for him, of course?"

"Of coorse, of coorse; but widout exthravagance; as asy an' light on a poor man as you can. You could

shorten it, sure, an' lave out a great dale that 'ud be of no use; an' half the paper 'ud do; for you might make the clerks write close; why, very little 'ud be wanted if you wor savin'."

"I can defend him with one counsel if you wish; but if anxious to save the boy's life, you ought to enable your attorney to secure a strong bar of the most eminent lawyers he can engage."

"An' what 'ud it cost to hire three or four o' them?"

"The whole expense might amount to between forty and fifty guineas."

A deep groan of dismay, astonishment, and anguish, was the only reply made to this for some time.

"Oh heavens above," he screamed, "what will—what *will* become of me! I'd rather be dead, as I'll soon be, than hear this, or know it at all. How could I get it? I'm as poor as poverty itself; oh couldn't you feel for the boy, an' defend him on trust; couldn't you feel for him?"

"It's your business to do that," returned the man of law, coolly.

"Feel for him; me? oh little you know how my heart's in him; but any way, I'm an unhappy man; everything in the world wide goes against me; but—oh my darlin' boy—Connor, Connor, my son, to be tould that I don't feel for you; well you know, avourneen machree, well you know that I feel for you, and 'ud kiss the track of your feet upon the ground. Oh, it's cruel to tell it to me; to say sich a thing to a man that his heart's breakin' widin him for your sake; but, sir, you said this minute that you could defind him wid *one* lawyer?"

"Certainly, and with a cheap one, too, if you wish; but in that case, I would rather decline the thing altogether."

"Why? why? sure if you can defind him chapely, isn't it so much saved? isn't it the same as if you definded him at a higher rate? Sure if one lawyer tells the truth for the poor boy, ten or fifty can do no more; an' thin

maybe they'd crass in an' puzzle one another if you hired too many of them."

"How would you feel should your son be found guilty? you know the penalty is his life. He will be executed."

O'Brien could hear the old man clap his hands in agony, and, in truth, he walked about wringing them as if his very heart would burst.

"What will I do?" he exclaimed; "what will I do? I can't lose him, an' I won't lose him; lose him! oh God, oh God, is it to lose the best son and only child that ever man had? wouldn't it be downright murdher in me to let him be lost, if I could prevent it? Oh, if I was in his place, what wouldn't he do for me, for the father that he always loved!"

The tears ran copiously down his furrowed ckeeks; and his whole appearance evinced such distraction and anguish as could rarely be seen.

"I'll tell you what I'll do," he added; "I'll give you fifty guineas *after my death* if you defind him properly."

"Much obliged," replied the other; "but in matters of this kind we make no such bargains."

"I'll make it sixty, in case you don't ax it *now*."

"Can you give me security that I'll survive you? Why you are tough looking enough to outlive me."

"Me tough! no, God help me, my race is nearly run; I won't be alive this day twelve months; look at the differ atween us."

"This is idle talk," said the attorney; "determine on what you'll do; really, my time is valuable, and I am now wasting it to no purpose."

"Take the offer—depind on't it'll soon come to you."

"No, no," said the other, coolly; "not at all; we might shut up shop if we made such *post obit* bargains as that."

"I'll tell you," said Fardorougha; "I'll tell you what;" his eyes gleamed with a reddish, bitter light, and he clasped his withered hands together until the joints

cracked, and the perspiration teemed from his pale, sallow features; "I'll tell you," he added; "I'll make it seventy!"

"No."

"Aighty!"

"No."

"Ninety!" with a husky shriek.

"No, no."

"A hundhre'—a hundhre'—a hundhre'," he shouted; "a hundhre', when I'm gone—*when I'm gone!*"

One solemn and determined no, that precluded all hopes of any such arrangement, was the only reply.

The old man leaped up again, and looked impatiently and wildly and fiercely about him.

"What are you?" he shouted; "what are you? You're a divil, a born divil. Will nothing but my death satisfy you? Do you want to rob me, to starve me, to murdher me? Don't you see the state I'm in by you? look at me; look at these thrimblin' limbs; look at the sweat powerin' down from my poor ould face! What is it you want? There—there's my gray hairs to you. You have brought me to that, to more than that; I'm dyin' this minute—I'm dyin'; oh, my boy, my boy, if I had you here; ay, I'm—I'm—"

He staggered over on his seat, his eyes gleaming in a fixed and intense glare at the attorney; his hands were clinched, his lips parched, and his mummy-like cheeks sucked, as before, into his toothless jaws. In addition to all this, there was a bitter white smile of despair upon his features, and his thin gray locks which were discomposed in the paroxysm by his own hands, stood out in disorder upon his head. We question, indeed, whether mere imagination could, without having actually beheld it in real life, conceive any object so frightfully illustrative of the terrible dominion which the passion of avarice is capable of exercising over the human heart.

"I protest to Heaven," exclaimed the attorney, "I believe the man is dying; if not dead, he is motionless."

"O'Donovan, what's the matter with you?"

The old man's lips gave a dry, hard smack, then became desperately compressed together, and his cheeks were drawn still farther into his jaws. At length he sighed deeply, and changed his fixed and motionless attitude.

"He is alive, at all events," said one of the young men.

Fardorougha turned his eyes upon the speaker, then upon his master, and successively upon two other assistants who were in the office.

"What is this?" said he, "what is this? I'm very weak; will you get me a dhrink o' wather! God help me—God direct me! I'm an unhappy man! get me a dhrink, for Heaven's sake; I can hardly spake, my mouth and lips are so dry."

The water having been procured, he drank it eagerly, and felt evidently relieved.

"This business," he continued, "about the money; I mane about my poor boy, Connor, how will it be managed, sir?"

"I have already told you that there is but one way of managing it, and that is, as the young man's life is at stake, to spare no cost."

"And I *must* do that?"

"You ought at least; remember that he's an only son, an' that if you lose him—"

"Lose him! I can't—I couldn't—I'd die—die—dead—"

"By so shameful a death," proceeded O'Halloran, "you will not only be childless, but you will have the bitter fact to reflect on, that he died in disgrace. You will blush to name him! What father would not make any sacrifice to prevent his child from meeting such a fate? It's a trying thing and a pitiable calamity to see a father ashamed to name the child that he loves."

The old man rose, and approaching O'Halloran, said, eagerly, "How much will do? Ashamed to name you,

alanna, *Chierna—Chierna;* ashamed to name you, Connor! Oh! if the world knew you, asthore, as well as I an' your poor mother knows you, they'd say that we ought to be proud to hear your name soundin' in our ears. How much will do? for may God strinthen me I'll do it."

"I think about forty guineas; it may be more, and it may be less, but we will say forty."

"Then I'll give you an ordher for it on a man that's a good mark. Give me a pen an' paper fast."

The paper was placed before him, and he held the pen in his hand for some time, and ere he wrote, turned a look of deep distress upon O'Halloran.

"God Almighty pity me," said he; "you see—you see that I am a poor heart-broken creature; a ruined man, I'll be a ruined man!"

"Think of your son, and of his situation."

"It's before me—I know it is—to die like a dog behind a ditch wid hunger, as I'll do yit!"

"Think of your son, I say, and, if possible, save him from a shameful death."

"What? Ay—yis—yis, surely—surely—oh, my poor boy—my innocent boy—I will—I *will* do it."

He then sat down, and with a tremulous hand, and lips tightly drawn together, wrote an order on P—, the county treasurer, for the money.

O'Halloran, on seeing it, looked alternately at the paper and the man for a considerable time.

"Is P— your banker?" he asked.

"Every penny that I'm worth he has."

"Then you are a ruined man," he replied, with cool emphasis. "P— absconded the day before yesterday, and robbed half the county. Have you no loose cash at home?"

"Robbed! who robbed?"

"Why, P— has robbed every man who was fool enough to trust him; he's off to the Isle of Man, with the county funds in addition to the other prog."

"You don't mane to say," replied Fardorougha, with a hideous calmness of voice and manner; "you *don't*, you *can't* mane to say that he has run off wid *my* money?"

"I do; you'll never see a shilling of it, if you live to the age of a Hebrew patriarch. See what it is to fix the haert upon money. You are now what you wished the world to believe you to be, a poor man."

"Ho, ho," howled the miser, "he darn't, he darn't; wouldn't God conshume him if he robbed the poor? wouldn't God stiffen him, and pin him to the airth, if he attimpted to run off wid the hard earnings of strugglin' honest men? Where 'ud God be, an' him to dar to do it? But it's a falsity, an' you're thryin' me to see how I'd bear it; it is, it is, an' may Heaven forgive you."

"It's as true as the gospel," replied the other; "why, I'm surprised you didn't hear it before now; every one knows it; it's over the whole country."

"It's a lie; it's a lie," he howled again: "no one dar to do sich an act. You have some schame in this; you're not a safe man; you're a villain, an nothin' else; but I'll soon know; which of these is my hat?"

"You are mad, I think," said O'Halloran.

"Get me my hat, I say: I'll soon know it; but sure the world's all in a schame aginst me—all, all, young an' ould: where's my hat, I say?"

"You've put it upon your head this moment," said the other.

"An' my stick?"

"It's in your hand."

"The curse o' Heaven upon you," he shrieked, "whether it's thrue or false," and, with a look that might scorch him to whom it was directed, he shuffled in a wild and frantic mood out of the house.

"The man is mad," observed O'Halloran, "or, if not, he will soon be so; I never beheld such a desperate case of avarice. If ever the demon of money lurked in any man soul, it's in his. God bless me! God bless me! it's

dreadful! Richard, tell the gentleman in the dining-room I'm at leisure to see him."

The scene we have attempted to describe spared O'Brien the trouble of much unpleasant inquiry, and enabled him to enter at once into the proposed arrangements on behalf of Connor. Of course he did not permit his sister's name to transpire, nor any trace whatsoever to appear by which her delicacy might be compromised, or her character involved. His interference in the matter he judiciously put upon the footing of personal regard for the young man, and his reluctance to be even the indirect means of bringing him to a violent and shameful death. Having thus fulfilled Una's instructions, he returned home, and relieved her of a heavy burden by a full communication of all that had been done.

CHAPTER IX.

THE struggle hitherto endured by Fardorougha was, in its own nature, sufficiently severe to render his sufferings sharp and pungent; still they resembled the influence of local disease, more than that of a malady which prostrates the strength and grapples with the powers of the whole constitution. The sensation he immediately felt on hearing that his banker had absconded with the gains of his penurious life, was rather a stunning shock that occasioned, for the moment, a feeling of dull, and heavy, and overwhelming dismay. It filled, nay, it actually distended his narrow soul with an oppressive sense of exclusive misery that banished all consideration for every person and thing extraneous to his individual selfishness. In truth, the tumult of his mind was peculiarly wild and anomalous. The situation of his son and the dreadful fate that hung over him were as completely forgotten as if they did not exist. Yet there lay underneath his own gloomy agony a remote consciousness of collateral affliction, such as is frequently experienced by those who may be drawn, by some temporary and present pleasure, from the contemplation of their misery. We feel, in such cases, that the darkness is upon us, even while the image of the calamity is not before the mind; nay, it sometimes requires an effort to bring it back, when anxious to account for our depression; but when it comes, the heart sinks with a shudder, and we feel, that although it ceased to engage our thoughts, we had been sitting all the time beneath its shadow. For this reason, although Fardorougha's own loss absorbed, in one sense, all his powers of suffering, still he knew that *something else* pressed with additional

weight upon his heart. Of its distinct character, however, he was ignorant, and only felt that a dead and heavy load of multiplied affliction bent him in burning anguish to the earth.

There is something more or less eccentric in the gait and dress of every miser. Fardorougha's pace was naturally slow, and the habit for which, in the latter point, he had all his life been remarkable, was that of wearing a great coat thrown loosely about his shoulders. In summer it saved an inside one, and, as he said, kept him cool and comfortable. That he seldom or never put his arms into it, arose from the fact that he knew it would last a much longer period of time than if he wore it in the usual manner.

On leaving the attorney's office, he might be seen creeping along toward the county treasurer's, at a pace quite unusual to him; his hollow gleaming eyes were bent on the earth; his *cothamore* about his shoulders; his staff held with a tight and desperate grip, and his whole appearance that of a man frightfully distracted by the intelligence of some sudden calamity.

He had not proceeded far on this hopeless errand, when many bitter confirmations of the melancholy truth were afforded him by persons whom he met on their return from P—'s residence. Even these, however, were insufficient to satisfy him; he heard them with a vehement impatience, that could not brook the bare possibility of the report being true. His soul clung with the tenacity of a death-grip to the hope that, however others might have suffered, some chance might, notwithstanding, still remain in *his* particular favour. In the mean time he poured out curses of unexampled malignity against the guilty defaulter, on whose head he invoked the Almighty's vengeance with a venomous fervour which appalled all who heard him. Having reached the treasurer's house, a scene presented itself that was by no means calculated to afford him consolation. Persons of every condition, from the squireen and gentleman farmer

to the humble widow and inexperienced orphan, stood in melancholy groups about the deserted mansion, interchanging details of their losses, their blasted prospects, and their immediate ruin. The cries of the widow, who mourned for the desolation brought upon her and her now destitute orphans, rose in a piteous wail to heaven, and the industrious fathers of many struggling families, with pale faces and breaking hearts, looked up in silent misery upon the closed shutters and smokeless chimneys of their oppressor's house, bitterly conscious that the laws of the boasted constitution under which they lived permitted the destroyer of hundreds to enjoy, in luxury and security, the many thousands of which, at one fell and rapacious swoop, he had deprived them.

With white quivering lips and panting breath, Fardorougha approached and joined them.

"What, what," said he, in broken sentences; "is this thrue? can it, can it be thrue? Is the thievin' villain gone? Has he robbed us, ruined us, destroyed us?"

"Ay, too thrue it is," replied a farmer; "the rip is off to that nest of robbers, the Isle of Man; ay, he's gone; an' may all our bad luck past, present, and to come, go with him, an' all he tuck."

Fardorougha looked at his informant as if he had been P— himself; he then glared from one to another, while the white foam wrought up to his lips by the prodigious force of his excitement. He clasped his hands, then attempted to speak, but language had abandoned him.

"If one is to judge by your appearance, you have suffered heavily," observed the farmer.

The other stared at him with a kind of angry amazement for doubting it, or, it might be, for speaking so coolly of his loss.

"Suffered," said he, "ay, ay, but did yees thry the house? we'll see—suffered! suffered!—we'll see."

He immediately shuffled over to the hall-door, which he assaulted with the eagerness of a despairing soul at

the gate of heaven, throwing into each knock such a character of impatience and apprehension, as one might suppose the aforesaid soul to feel from a certain knowledge that the devil's clutches were spread immediately behind, to seize and carry him to perdition. His impetuosity, however, was all in vain; not even an echo reverberated through the cold and empty walls, but, on the contrary, every peal was followed by a most unromantic and ominous silence.

"That man appears beside himself," observed another of the sufferers; "surely, if he wasn't half mad he'd not expect to find any one in an empty house?"

"Divil a much it signifies whether he's mad or otherwise," responded a neighbour; "I know him well; his name's Fardorougha Donovan, the miser of Lisnamona, the biggest shkrew that ever skinned a flint. If P— did nothin' worse than fleece *him*, it would never stand between him an' the blessin' o' heaven."

Fardorougha, in the mean time, finding that no response was given from the front, passed hurriedly by an archway into the back court, where he made similar efforts to get in by attempting to force the kitchen door. Every entrance, however, had been strongly secured; he rattled, and thumped, and screamed, as if P— himself had actually been within hearing, but still to no purpose; he might as well have expected to extort a reply from the grave.

When he returned to the group that stood on the lawn, the deadly conviction that all was lost affected every joint of his body with a nervous trepidation, that might have been mistaken for *delirium tremens*. His eyes were full of terror, mingled with the impotent fury of hatred and revenge; while over all now predominated for the first time such an expression of horror and despair, as made the spectators shudder to look upon him.

"Where was God," said he, addressing them, and his voice, naturally thin and wiry, now became husky and hollow; "where was God to suffer this? to suffer

the poor to be ruined and the rich to be made poor? Was it right for the Almighty to look on an' let the villain do it? No, no, no; I say NO!"

The group around him shuddered at the daring blasphemy to which his monstrous passion had driven him. Many females who were in tears, lamenting audibly, started, and felt their grief suspended for a moment by this revolting charge against the justice of Providence.

"What do you all stand for here," he proceeded, "like stocks an' stones? Why don't yees kneel with me, an' let us join in one curse; one, no, but let us shower them down upon him in thousands, in millions; an' when we can no longer *spake* them, let us *think* them. To the last hour of my life my heart'ill never be widout a curse for him; an' the last word afore I go into the presence of God 'ill be a black heavy blessin' from hell against him an' his, sowl an' body, while a drop o' their bad blood's upon earth."

"Don't be blasphemin', honest man," said a by-stander; "if you've lost your money, that's no reason why you should fly in the face o' God for P——'s roguery. Divil a one o' myself cares if I join you in a volley against the robbin' scoundrel, but I'd not take all the money the rip ran away wid, an' spake of God as you do."

"Oh Saver!" exclaimed Fardorougha, who probably heard not a word he said; "I knew—I knew—I always felt it was before me; a dog's death behind a ditch; my tongue out wid starvation and hunger, and it was he brought me to it!"

He had already knelt, and was uncovered, his whitish hair tossed by the breeze in confusion about a face on which was painted the fearful workings of that giant spirit, under whose tremendous grasp he writhed and suffered like a serpent in the talons of a vulture. In this position, with uplifted and trembling arms, his face raised toward heaven, and his whole

figure shrunk firmly together by the intense malignity with which he was about to hiss out his venomous imprecations against the defaulter, he presented at least one instance in which the low sordid vice of avarice rose to something like wild grandeur if not sublimity.

Having remained in this posture for some time, he clasped his withered hands together, and wrung them until the bones cracked; then rising up and striking his stick bitterly on the earth:

"I can't," he exclaimed, "I can't get out the curses against him; but my heart's full of them; they're in it—they're in it—it's black an' hot wid them; I feel them here—here—*movin' as if they wor alive*, an' they'll be out."

Such was the strength and impetuosity of his hatred, and such his eagerness to discharge the whole quiver of his maledictions against the great public delinquent, that, as often happens in cases of overwhelming agitation, his faculties were paralyzed by the storm of passion which raged within him.

He rose to his feet and left the group, muttering his wordless malignity as he went along, and occasionally pausing to look back with the fiery glare of a hyena at the house in which the robbery of his soul's treasure had been planned and accomplished.

It is unnecessary to say that the arrangements entered into with O'Halloran by John O'Brien were promptly and ably carried into effect. A rapid ride soon brought the man of briefs and depositions to the prison where unhappy Connor lay. This young man's story, though simple, was improbable, and his version of the burning such as induced O'Halloran, who knew little of impressions and feelings in the absence of facts, to believe that no other head than his concocted the crime. Still, from the manly sincerity with which his young client spoke, he felt inclined to impute the act rather to a freak of boyish malace and disappointment, than to a spirit of vindictive rancour. He entertained no expectation what-

ever of Connor's acquittal, and hinted to him that it was his habit in such cases to recommend his clients to be prepared for the worst, without at the same time altogether abolishing hope. There was, indeed, nothing to break the chain of circumstantial evidence in which Flanagan had entangled him: he had been at the haggard shortly before the conflagration broke out: he had met Phil Curtis, and begged that man to conceal the fact of his having seen him, and he had not slept in his own bed either on that or the preceding night. It was to no purpose he affirmed that Flanagan himself had borrowed from him and worn on the night in question the shoes whose prints were so strongly against him, or that the steel and tinder-box, which was found in his pocket, actually belonged to his accuser, who must have put them there without his knowledge. His case, in fact, was a bad one, and he felt that the interview with his attorney left him more seriously impressed with the danger of his situation, than he had been up till that period.

"I suppose," said he, when the instructions were completed, "you have seen my father."

"Everything is fully and liberally arranged," replied the other, with a reservation; "your father has been with me to-day; in fact, I parted with him only a few minutes before I left home. So far let your mind be easy. The government prosecutes, which is something in your favour; and now, good-by to you; for my part, I advise you neither to hope nor despair. If the worst comes to the worst, you must bear it like a man, and if we get an acquittal, it will prove the more agreeable for its not being expected."

The unfortunate youth felt, after O'Halloran's departure, the full force of that dark and fearful presentiment which arises from the approach of the mightiest calamity that can befall an innocent man; a public and ignominious death, while in the very pride of youth, strength, and those natural hopes of happiness which existence had

otherwise promised. In him this awful apprehension proceeded neither from the terror of judgment nor of hell, but from that dread of being withdrawn from life, and of passing down from the light, the enjoyments, and busy intercourse of a breathing and conscious world, into the silence and corruption of the unknown grave. When this ghastly picture was brought near him by the force of his imagination, he felt for a moment as if his heart had died away in him, and his blood become congealed into ice. Should this continue, he knew that human nature could not sustain it long, and he had already resolved to bear his fate with firmness, whatever that fate might be. He then reflected that he was innocent, and remembering the practice of his simple and less political forefathers, he knelt down and fervently besought the protection of that Being in whose hands are the issues of life and death.

On rising from this act of heartfelt devotion, he experienced that strength which he so much required. The fear of death ceased to alarm him, and his natural fortitude returned with more than its usual power to his support. In this state of mind he was pacing his narrow room, when the door opened, and his father, with a tottering step, entered, and approached him. The son was startled, if not terrified, at the change which so short a time had wrought in the old man's appearance.

"Good God, father dear," he exclaimed, as the latter threw his arms with a tight and clinging grasp about him, "good heavens, what has happened to change you so much for the worse? why, if you fret this way about me, you'll soon break your heart; why will you fret, father, when you know I am *innocent?* Surely, at the worst, it is better to die innocent than to live guilty?"

"Connor," said the old man, still clinging tenaciously to him, and looking wildly in his face; "Connor, it's broke; my heart's broke at last. Oh, Connor, won't you pity me when you hear it; won't you, Connor; oh when you hear it, Connor, won't you pity me? It's gone, it's

gone, it's gone; he's off, off to that nest of robbers, the Isle of Man, and has robbed me and half the county; P—— has; I'm a ruined man, a beggar, an' will die a dog's death."

Connor looked down keenly into his father's face, and began to entertain a surmise so terrible that the beatings of his heart were in a moment audible to his own ear.

"Father," he inquired, "in the name of God what is wrong with you? what is it you speak of? Has P—— gone off with your money? Sit down, and don't look so terrified."

"He has, Connor; robbed me and half the county; he disappeared the evenin' of the very day I left my last lodgment wid him; he's in that nest of robbers, the Isle of Man, an' I'm ruined—ruined! Oh, God! Connor, how can I stand it? all my earnin's, an' my savin's, an' the fruits of my industhry in *his* pocket, an' upon *his* back, an' upon *his* bones! My brain is reelin'; I dunna what I'm doin', nor what I'll do. To what hand now can I turn myself? who'll assist me? I dunna what I'm doin', nor scarcely what I'm sayin'. My head's all in confusion. Gone! gone! gone! Oh see the luck that has come down upon me! Above all men, why was I singled out to be made a world's wondher of; why was *I?* What did I do? I robbed no one: yet it's gone; an' see the death that's afore me! oh God! oh God!"

"Well, father, let it go; you have still your health; you have still my poor mother to console you; and I hope you'll soon have myself too; between us we'll keep you comfortable, an' if you'll allow us to take our own way, more so than ever you did—"

Fardorougha started, as if struck by some faint but sudden recollection. All at once he looked with amazement around the room, and afterward with a pause of inquiry at his son. At length a light of some forgotten memory appeared to flash at once across his brain; his countenance changed from the wild unsettled expression

which it bore, to one more stamped with the earnest humanity of our better nature.

"Oh, Connor," he at last exclaimed, putting his two hands into those of his son; "can you pity me, an' forgive me? You see, my poor boy, how I'm sufferin', an' you see that I can't—I won't—be able to bear up against this long."

The tears here ran down his worn and hollow cheeks.

"Oh," he proceeded, "how could I forget you, my darlin' boy? but I hardly think my head's right. If I had you with me, an' before my eyes, you'd keep my heart right, an' give me strength, which I stand sorely in need of. Saints in glory! how could I forget you, acushla, an' what now can I do for you? Not a penny have I to pay lawyer, or attorney, or any one, to defind you at your trial, and it so near!"

"Why, haven't you settled all that with Mr. O'Halloran, the attorney?"

"Not a bit, achora machree, not a bit; I was wid him this day, an' had agreed, but whin I wint to give him an ordher on P——, he—oh saints above, he *fwhistled* at me an' it, an' tould me that P—— was gone to that nest o' robbers, the Isle of Man."

Connor turned his eyes, during a long pause, on the floor, and it was evident by his features that he laboured under some powerful and profound emotion. He rose up and took a sudden turn or two across the room, then resuming his seat, he wiped away a few bitter tears that no firmness on his part could repress.

"Noble girl—my darling, darling life, I see it all," he exclaimed. "Father, I never felt how bitter an' dark my fate is till *now;* death, death would be little to me, only for her; but to leave her—to leave *her*—" He suddenly buried his face in his hands; but, by an instant effort, once more rose up and added, "Well, I'll die worthy of her, if I can't live so. Like a man I'll die, if it must be: she knows I'm innocent, father; an' when others, when the world will be talking of me as a villain, there will be, out

of my own family, at all events, one heart and one tongue, that will defend my unhappy name. If I am to come to a shameful death, I'll care little about what the world may think, but that *she* knows me to be innocent, will make me die proudly—proudly."

While he thus spoke and thought, the father's eyes, with a fixed gaze, steadily followed his motions; the old man's countenance altered; it first became pale as the ghastly visage of a skeleton, anon darkened with horror, which eventually shifted its hue into the workings of some passion or feeling that was new to him.

"Connor," said he feebly, "I am unwell—unwell—come and sit down by me."

"You are too much distressed every way, father," said his son, taking his place upon the iron bedstead beside him.

"I am," said Fardorougha, calmly; "I am too much distressed; sit nearer to me, Connor. I wish your mother was here, but she was not able to come; she's unwell too; a good mother she was, Connor, and a good wife."

The son was struck, and somewhat alarmed by this sudden and extraordinary calmness of the old man.

"Father dear," said he, "don't be too much disheartened; all will be well yet, I hope; my trust in God is strong."

"I hope all *will* be well," replied the old man; "sit nearer me, an', Connor, let me lay my head over upon your breast. I'm thinkin' a great dale; don't the world say, Connor, that I am a bad man?"

"I don't care what the world says; no one in it ever durst say as much to *me*, father dear."

The old man looked up affectionately, but shook his head apparently in calm but rooted sorrow.

"Put your arms about me, Connor, and keep my head a little more up; I'm weak an' tired, an', someway, spakin's a throuble to me; let me think for a while."

"Do so, father," said the son, with deep compassion;

"God knows but you're sufferings are enough to wear you out."

"They are," said Fardorougha, "they are."

A silence of some minutes ensued, during which Connor perceived that the old man, overcome with care and misery, had actually fallen asleep with his head upon his bosom. This circumstance, though by no means extraordinary, affected him very much. On surveying the pallid face of his father, and the worn, thread-like veins that ran along his temples, and calling to mind the love of the old man for himself, which even avarice, in its deadliest power, failed to utterly overcome, he felt all the springs of his affection loosened, and his soul vibrated with a tenderness toward him, such as no situation in their past lives had ever before created.

"If my fate chances to be an untimely one, father dear," he slowly murmured, "we'll soon meet in another place, for I know that you will not long live after me."

He then thought with bitterness of his mother and Una, and wondered at the mystery of the trial to which he was exposed.

The old man's slumber, however, was not dreamless, nor so refreshing as the exhaustion of a frame shattered by the havoc of contending principles required. On the contrary, it was disturbed by heavy groans, quick startings, and those twitchings of the limbs which betoken a restless mood of mind, and a nervous system highly excited. In the course of half an hour, the symptoms of his inward commotion became more apparent; from being, as at first, merely physical, they assumed a mental character, and passed from ejaculations and single words to short sentences, and ultimately to those of considerable length.

"Gone," he exclaimed, "gone; oh God! my curse—starved—dog—wid my tongue out!"

This dread of starvation, which haunted him through life, appeared in his dream still to follow him like a demon.

"I'm dyin'," he said, "I'm dyin' wid hunger; will no one give me a morsel? I was robbed an' have no money —don't you see me starvin'? I'm cuttin' wid hunger—five days widout mate—bring me mate, for God's sake—mate, mate, mate! I'm gaspin'—my tongue's out; look at me, like a dog, behind this ditch, an' my tongue out!"

The son at this period would have awoke him, but he became more composed for a time, and enjoyed apparently a refreshing sleep. Still, it soon was evident that he dreamed, and as clear that "a change had come o'er the spirit of his dream."

"Who'll prevent me?" he exclaimed; "isn't he my son, our only child? Let me alone—I must, I must—what's my life, take *it*, an' let *him* live."

The tears started to Connor's eyes, and he pressed his father to his heart."

"Don't hould me," he proceeded; "oh God, here, I'll give all I'm worth, an' save him! Oh let me, thin —let me but kiss him once before he dies; it was I, it was myself that murdhered him—all might 'a been well; ay, it was I that murdhered you, Connor, my brave boy, an' have I you in my arms? Oh, *avick agus ashtor machree*, it was I that murdhered you, by my —but they're takin' him—they're tearin' him away to—."

He started, and awoke, but so terrific had been his dream, that on opening his eyes he clasped Connor in his arms, and exclaimed,

"No, no, I'll hould him till you cut my grip; Connor avick, avick machree, hould to me!"

"Father, father, for God's sake, think a minute, you wor only dreamin'."

"Eh—what—where am I? Oh, Connor darlin', if you knew what dhrames I had, I thought you wor on the scaffle; but, thanks be to the Saver, it *was* only a dhrame."

"Nothing more, father—nothing more; but, for God's sake, keep your mind asy. Trust in God, father; everything's in *his* hands; if it's his will to make

us suffer, we ought to submit; and if it's not his will, he surely can bring us out of all our troubles. That's the greatest comfort I have."

Fardorougha once more became calm, but still there was on his countenance, which was mournful and full of something else than simple sorrow, some deeply fixed determination, such as it was difficult to develope.

"Connor, achora," said he, "I must lave you, for there's little time to be lost. What attorney would you wish me to employ? I'll go home an' sell oats an' a cow or two. I've done you harm enough—more than you know—but now I'll spare no cost to get you out of this business. Connor, the tears that I saw a while agone run down your cheeks cut me to the heart."

The son informed him that a friend had taken proper measures for his defence, and any farther interference on his part would only create confusion and delay. He also entreated his father to make no allusion whatsoever to *this* circumstance, and added, "that he himself actually knew not the name of the friend in question, but that, as the matter stood, he considered even a surmise to be a breach of confidence that might be indelicate and offensive. After the trial, you can and ought to pay the expenses, and not be under an obligation to any one of so solemn a kind as that." He then sent his affectionate love and duty to his mother, at whose name his eyes were again filled with tears, and begged the old man to comfort and support her with the utmost care and tenderness. As she was unwell, he requested him to dissuade her against visiting him till after the trial, lest an interview might increase her illness, and render her less capable of bearing up under an unfavourable sentence, should such be the issue of the prosecution. Having then bade farewell to, and embraced the old man, the latter departed with more calmness and fortitude than he had up to that period displayed.

CHAPTER X.

WHEN Time approaches the miserable with calamity in his train, his pinion is swifter than that of the eagle; but alas! when carrying them toward happiness, his pace is slower than that of the tortoise. The only three persons on earth whose happiness was involved in that of Donovan, found themselves, on the eve of the assizes, overshadowed by a dreariness of heart, that was strong in proportion to the love they bore him. The dead calm which had fallen on Fardorougha was absolutely more painful to his wife, than would have been the paroxysms that resulted from his lust of wealth. Since his last interview with Connor, he never once alluded to the loss of his money, unless abruptly in his dreams; but there was stamped upon his whole manner a glory and mysterious composure, which, of itself, wofully sank her spirits, independently of the fate which impended over their son. The change visible on both, and the breaking down of their strength, were indeed pitiable.

As for Una, it would be difficult to describe her struggle between confidence in his innocence and apprehension of the law, which she knew had often punished the guiltless instead of the criminal. 'Tis true, she attempted to assume, in the eyes of others, a fortitude which belied her fears, and even affected to smile at the possibility of her lover's honour and character suffering any tarnish from the ordeal to which they were about to be submitted. Her smile, however, on such occasions, was a melancholy one, and the secret tears she shed might prove, as they did to her brother, who was alone privy to her grief, the extent of those terrors which, notwithstanding her dis-

avowel of them, wrung her soul so bitterly. Day after day her spirits became more and more depressed, till, as the crisis of Connor's fate arrived, the roses had altogether flown from her cheeks.

Indeed, now that the trial was at hand, public sympathy turned rapidly and strongly in his favour. His father had lost that wealth, the acquisition of which earned him so heavy a portion of infamy; and as he had been sufficiently punished *in his own person*, they did not think it just to transfer any portion of the resentment borne against him to a son who had never participated in his system of oppression. They felt for Connor now on his own account, and remembered only his amiable and excellent character. In addition to this, the history of the mutual attachment between him and Una having become the topic of general conversation, the rash act for which he stood committed was good-humouredly resolved into a foolish freak of love, for which it would be a thousand murders to take away his life. In such mood was the public, and the parties most interested in the event of our story, when the morning dawned of that awful day which was to restore Connor O'Donovan to the hearts that loved him so well, or to doom him, a convicted felon, to a shameful and ignominious death.

At length the trial came on, and our unhappy prisoner, at the hour of eleven o'clock, was placed at the bar of his country to stand the brunt of a government prosecution. Common report had already carried abroad the story of Una's love and his, many interesting accounts of which had got into the papers of the day. When he stood forward, therefore, all eyes were eagerly riveted upon him; the judge glanced at him with calm dispassionate scrutiny, and the members of the bar, especially the juniors, turning round, surveyed him through their glasses with a gaze in which might be read something more than that hard indifference which familiarity with human crime and affliction ultimately produces even in dispositions the most humane and amiable. No sooner had the curiosity of the

multitude been gratified, than a murmur of pity, blended slightly with surprise and approbation, ran lowly through the courthouse. The judge again surveyed him with a countenance in which were depicted admiration and regret. The counsel also chatted to each other in a low tone, occasionally turning round and marking his deportment and appearance with increasing interest.

Seldom, probably never, had a more striking, perhaps a more noble figure, stood at the bar of that court. His locks were rich and brown; his forehead expansive, and his manly features remarkable for their symmetry; his teeth were regular and white, and his dark eye full of a youthful lustre which no dread of calamity could repress. Neither was his figure, which was of the tallest, inferior in a single point to so fine a countenance. As he stood, at his full height of six feet, it was impossible not to feel deeply influenced in his favour, especially after having beheld the mournful but dignified composure of his manner, equally remote from indifference or dejection. He appeared indeed to view in its proper light the danger of the position in which he stood, but he viewed it with the calm unshrinking energy of a brave man who is always prepared for the worst. Indeed, there might be observed upon his broad open brow a loftiness of bearing such as is not unfrequently produced by a consciousness of innocence, and the natural elevation of mind which results from a sense of danger; to which we may add that inward scorn which is ever felt for baseness, by those who are degraded to the necessity of defending themselves against the villany of the malignant and profligate.

When called upon to plead to the indictment, he uttered the words "not guilty" in a full, firm, and mellow voice that drew the eyes of the spectators once more upon him, and occasioned another slight hum of sympathy and admiration. No change of colour was observable on his countenance, nor any other expression, save the lofty composure to which we have just alluded.

The trial at length proceeded, and, after a long and able statement from the attorney-general, Bartle Flanagan was called upon the table. The prisoner, whose motions were keenly observed, betrayed, on seeing him, neither embarrassment nor agitation; all that could be perceived, was a more earnest and intense light in his eyes, as they settled upon his accuser. Flanagan detailed, with singular minuteness and accuracy, the whole progress of the crime from its first conception to its perpetration. Indeed, had he himself been in the dock, and his evidence against Connor a confession of his own guilt, it would, with some exceptions, have been literally true. He was ably cross-examined, but no tact, or experience, or talent, on the part of the prisoner's counsel, could in any important degree shake his testimony. The ingenuity with which he laid and conducted the plot was astonishing, as was his foresight, and the precaution he adopted against detection. O'Halloran, Connor's attorney, had ferretted out the very man from whom he purchased the tinder-box, with a hope of proving that it was not the prisoner's property, but his own, yet this person, who remembered the transaction very well, assured him that Flanagan said he procured it by the desire of Fardorougha Donovan's son.

During his whole evidence, he never once raised his eyes to look upon the prisoner's face, until he was desired to identify him. He then turned round, and standing with the rod in his hand, looked for some moments upon his victim. His dark brows got black as night, while his cheeks were blanched to the hue of ashes; the white smile as before sat upon his lips, and his eyes, in which there blazed the unsteady fire of a treacherous and cowardly heart, sparkled with the red turbid glare of triumph and vengeance. He laid the rod upon Connor's head, and they gazed at each other face to face, exhibiting as striking a contrast as could be beheld. The latter stood erect and unshaken, his eye calmly bent upon that of his foe, but with a spirit in it that seemed to *him*

alone by whom it was best understood, to strike dismay into the very soul of falsehood within him. The villain's eyes could not stand the glance of Connor's; they fell, and his whole countenance assumed such a blank and guilty stamp, that an old experienced barrister who watched them both, could not avoid saying, that if he had his will, they should exchange situations.

"I would not hang a dog," he whispered, "on that fellow's evidence; he has guilt in his face."

When asked why he ran away on meeting Phil Curtis, near O'Brien's house, on their return that night, while Connor held his ground, he replied that it was very natural he should run away, and not wish to be seen after having assisted at such a crime. In reply to another question, he said it was as natural that Connor should have run away also, and that he could not account for it, except by the fact that God always occasions the guilty to commit some oversight, by which they may be brought to punishment. These replies, apparently so rational and satisfactory, convinced Connor's counsel that his case was hopeless, and that no skill or ingenuity on their part could succeed in breaking down Flanagan's evidence.

The next witness called was Phil Curtis, whose testimony corroborated Bartle's in every particular, and gave to the whole trial a character of gloom and despair. The constables who applied his shoes to the footmarks were then produced, and swore in the clearest manner as to their corresponding. They then deposed to finding the tinder-box in his pocket, according to the information received from Flanagan, every tittle of which they found to be remarkably correct.

There was only one other witness now necessary to complete the chain against him, and he was only produced because Biddy Nulty, the servant-maid, positively stated, and actually swore, when previously examined, that she was ignorant whether Connor slept in his father's house on the night in question or not. There was no al-

ternative, therefore, but to produce the father; and Fardorougha Donovan was consequently forced to become an evidence against his own son.

The old man's appearance upon the table excited deep commiseration for both, and the more so when the spectators contemplated the rooted sorrow which lay upon the wild and wasted features of the woworn father. Still the old man was composed and calm; but his calmness was in an extraordinary degree mournful and touching. When he sat down after having been sworn, and feebly wiped the dew from his thin temples, many eyes were already filled with tears. When the question was put to him if he remembered the night laid in the indictment, he replied that he did.

"Did the prisoner at the bar sleep at home on that night?"

The old man looked into the face of the counsel with such an eye of deprecating entreaty, as shook the voice in which the question was repeated. He then turned about, and taking a long gaze at his son, rose up, and extending his hands to the judge, exclaimed,

"My lord, my lord, he is my only son—my only child!"

These words were followed by a pause in the business of the court, and a dead silence of more than a minute.

"If justice," said the judge, "could on any occasion waive her claim to a subordinate link in the testimony she requires, it would certainly be in a case so painful and affecting as this. Still, we cannot permit personal feeling, however amiable, or domestic attachment, however strong, to impede her progress when redressing public wrong. Although the duty be painful, and, we admit, that such a duty is one of unexampled agony, yet it must be complied with, and you consequently will answer the question which the counsel has put to you. The interests of society require such sacrifices, and they must be made."

The old man kept his eyes fixed on the judge while he spoke, but when he ceased, he again fixed them on his son.

"My lord," he exclaimed again, with clasped hands, "I can't, I can't."

"There is nothing criminal, or improper, or sinful in it," replied the judge; "on the contrary, it is your duty both as a Christian and a man. Remember, you have this moment sworn to tell the truth, and the *whole* truth; you consequently must keep your oath."

"What you say, sir, may be right, an' of coorse is; but oh, my lord, I'm not able; *I can't get out the words to hang my only boy*. If I sed anything to hurt him, my heart 'ud break before your eyes. Maybe you don't know the love of a father for an only son?"

"Perhaps, my lords," observed the attorney-general, "it would be desirable to send for a clergyman of his own religion, who might succeed in prevailing on him to——"

"No," interrupted Fardorougha, "my mind's made up; a word against him will never come from my lips, not for priest or friar. I'd die widout the saykerment sooner."

"This is trifling with the court," said the judge, assuming an air of severity, which, however, he did not feel. "We shall be forced to commit you to prison unless you give evidence."

"My lord," said Fardorougha, meekly but firmly, "I am willin' to go to prison. I am willin' to die wid him, if he's to die; but I neither can nor will open my lips against him. If I thought him guilty I might, but I know he is innocent—my heart knows it; an' am I to back the villain that's strivin' to swear away his life? No, Connor avourneen, whatever they do to you, your father will have no hand in it."

The court, in fact, were perplexed in the extreme. The old man was not only firm, from motives of strong attachment, but intractable from a habitual narrowness of

thought which prevented him from taking that comprehensive view of justice and judicial authority, which might overcome the repugnance of men less obstinate from ignorance of legal usages.

"I ask you for the last time," said the judge, "will you give your evidence? because, if you refuse, the court will feel bound to send you to prison."

"God bless you, my lord; that's a relief to my heart; anything, anything, but to say a word against a boy that, since the day he was born, never vexed either his mother or myself. If he gets over this, I have much to make up to him; for indeed I wasn't the father to him that I ought. Avick machree, now I feel it, maybe whin it's too late."

These words affected all who heard them, many even to tears.

"I have no remedy," observed the judge. "Tipstaff, take away the witness to prison. It is painful to me," he added, in a broken voice, "to feel compelled thus to punish you for an act which, however I may respect the motives that dictate it, I cannot overlook. The ends of justice cannot be frustrated."

"My lord," exclaimed the prisoner, "don't punish the old man for refusing to speak against me. His love for me is so strong, that I know he couldn't do it. I will state the truth myself, but spare him. I did *not* sleep in my own bed on the night Mr. O'Brien's haggard was burned, nor on the night before it. I slept in my father's barn with Flanagan, both times at his own request, but I did not then suspect his design in asking me."

"This admission, though creditable to your affection and filial duty, was indiscreet," observed the judge. "Whatever you think might be serviceable, suggest to your attorney, who can communicate it to your counsel."

"My lord," said Connor, "I could not see my father punished for loving me as he does; an' besides, I have no wish to conceal anything. If the whole truth could

be known, I would stand but a short time where I am, nor would Flanagan be long out of it."

There is an earnest and impressive tone in truth, especially when spoken under circumstances of great difficulty, where it is rather disadvantageous to him who utters it, that in many instances produces conviction by an inherent candour which all feel without any process of reasoning or argument. There was in those few words a warmth of affection toward his father, and a manly simplicity of heart, each of which was duly appreciated by the assembly about him, who felt, without knowing why, the indignant scorn of falsehood that so emphatically pervaded his expressions. It was indeed impossible to hear them, and look upon his noble countenance and figure without forgetting the humbleness of his rank in life, and feeling for him a marked deference of respect.

The trial then proceeded, but, alas, the hopes of Connor's friends abandoned them at its conclusion; for although the judge's charge was as favourable as the nature of the evidence permitted, yet it was quite clear that the jury had only one course to pursue, and that was to bring in a conviction. After a lapse of about ten minutes, they returned to the jury-box, and as the foreman handed down their verdict, a feather might be heard falling in the court, the faces of the spectators got pale, and the hearts of strong men beat as if the verdict about to be announced were to fall upon themselves, and not upon the prisoner. It is at all times an awful and trying ceremony to behold, but on this occasion it was a much more affecting one than had occurred in the court for many years. As the foreman handed down the verdict, Connor's eye followed the paper with the same calm resolution which he displayed during the trial. On himself there was no change visible, unless the appearance of two round spots, one on each cheek, of a somewhat deeper red than the rest.

At length, in the midst of the dead silence, pronounced in a voice that reached to the remotest extremity of the court, was heard the fatal sentence—"Guilty;" and afterward, in a less distinct manner, "with our strongest and most earnest recommendation for mercy, in consequence of his youth and previous good character." The wail and loud sobbings of the female part of the crowd, and the stronger but more silent grief of the men, could not for many minutes be repressed by any efforts of the court or its officers.

In the midst of this, a little to the left of the dock, was an old man, whom those around him were conveying in a state of insensibility out of the court, and it was obvious that, from motives of humane consideration for the prisoner, they endeavoured to prevent him from ascertaining that it was his father. In this, however, they failed; the son's eye caught a glimpse of his gray locks, and it was observed that his cheek for the first time indicated, by a momentary change, that the only evidence of agitation he betrayed was occasioned by sympathy in the old man's sorrows, rather than by the contemplation of his own fate.

The tragic spirit of the day, however, was still to deepen, and a more stunning blow, though less acute in its agony, was to fall upon the prisoner. The stir of the calm and solemn jurors, as they issued out of their room; the hushed breath of the spectators; the deadly silence that prevails; and the appalling announcement of the word "Guilty," are circumstances that test human fortitude, more even than the passing of the fearful sentence itself. In the latter case hope is banished, and the worst that can happen known; the mind is, therefore, thrown back upon its last energies, which give it strength in the same way in which the death-struggle frequently arouses the muscular action of the body; an unconscious power of resistance that forces the culprit's heart to take refuge in the first and strongest instincts of its nature, the undying principle of self-preservation. No sooner was the

verdict returned, and silence obtained, than the judge, now deeply affected, put on the black cap, at which a low wild murmur of stifled grief and pity ran through the courthouse; but no sooner was his eye bent on the prisoner, than their anxiety to hear the sentence hushed them once more into the stillness of the grave. The prisoner looked upon him with an open but melancholy gaze, which, from the candid and manly character of his countenance, was touching in the extreme.

"Connor O'Donovan," said the judge, "have you anything to say why sentence of death should not be passed upon you?"

"My lord," he replied, "I can say nothing to prevent it. I am prepared for it. I know I must bear it, and I hope I will bear it as a man ought that feels his heart free from even a thought of the crime he is to die for. I have nothing more to say."

"You have this day been found guilty," proceeded the judge, "and, in the opinion of the court, upon clear and satisfactory evidence, of a crime marked by a character of revenge, which, I am bound to say, must have proceeded from a very malignant spirit. It was a wanton act, for the perpetration of which your motives were so inadequate that one must feel at a loss to ascertain the exact principle on which you committed it. It was also not only a wicked act, but one so mean, that a young man bearing the character of spirit and generosity which you have hitherto borne, as appears from the testimony of those respectable persons who this day have spoken in your favour, ought to have scorned to contemplate it even for a moment. Had the passion you entertained for the daughter of the man you so basely injured, possessed one atom of the dignity, disinterestedness, or purity of true affection, you never could have stooped to any act offensive to the object of your love, or to those even in the remotest degree related to her. The example, consequently, which you have held out to society is equally vile and dangerous. You punished the father by a das-

tardly and unmanly act, for guarding the future peace and welfare of a child so young and so dear to him. What would become of society if this exercise of a parent's right on behalf of his daughter were to be visited upon him as a crime, by every vindictive and disappointed man, whose affection for her he might, upon proper grounds, decline to sanction? Yet it is singular, and, I confess, almost inexplicable to me at least, why you should have rushed into the commission of such an act. The brief period of your existence has been stained by no other crime. On the contrary, you have maintained a character far above your situation in life—a character equally remarkable for gentleness, spirit, truth, and affection—and I must confess, that on no other occasion of my judicial life have I ever felt my judgment and my feelings so much at variance. I cannot doubt your guilt, but I shed those tears that it ever existed, and that a youth of so much promise should be cut down prematurely by the strong arm of necessary justice, leaving his bereaved parents bowed down with despair that can never be comforted. Had they another son, or another child to whom their affections could turn—"

Here the judge felt it necessary to pause, in consequence of his emotion. Strong feeling had, indeed, spread through the whole court, in which, while he ceased, could be heard low moanings and other symptoms of acute sorrow.

"It is now your duty to forget every earthly object on which your heart may have been fixed, and to seek that source of consolation and mercy which can best sustain and comfort you. Go with a penitent heart to the throne of your Redeemer, who, if your repentance be sincere, will in no wise cast you out. The recommendation of the jury to the mercy of the crown, in consideration of your youth and previous good conduct, will not be overlooked; but in the mean time the court is bound to pronounce upon you the sentence of the law, which is, that you be taken from the prison from which you came on the 8th of next month, at the hour of twelve o'clock

in the forenoon, to the front drop of the jail, and there hanged by the neck until you be dead, and may God have mercy on your soul!"

"My lord," said the prisoner, unmoved in voice or manner, unless it might be that both expressed more decision and energy than he had shown during any other part of the trial; "my lord, I am now a condemned man, but if I stood with the rope about my neck ready to die, I would not exchange situations with the man that has been my accuser. My lord, I can forgive him and I ought, for I know he has yet to die, and must meet his God. As for myself, I am thankful that I have not such a conscience as his to bring afore my judge; *and for this reason I am not afraid to die.*"

He was then removed amid a murmur of grief, as deep and sincere as was ever expressed for a human being under circumstances of a similar character. After having entered the prison, he was about to turn along a passage which led to the apartment hitherto allotted to him.

"This way," said the turnkey, "this way; God knows I would be glad to let you stop in the room you had, but I haven't the power. We must put you into one of the condemned cells; but, by ——it 'ill go hard if I don't stretch a little to make you as comfortable as possible."

"Take no trouble," said Connor, "take no trouble. I care now little about my own comfort; but if you wish to oblage me, bring me my father. Oh, my mother, my mother! you, I doubt, are struck down already!"

"She was too ill to attend the trial to-day," replied the turnkey.

"I know it," said Connor; "but as she's not here, bring me my father. Send out a messenger for him, and be quick, for I won't rest till I see him; he wants comfort; the old man's heart will break."

"I heard them say," replied the turnkey, after they had entered the cell allotted to him, "that he was in a faint in Mat Corrigan's public-house, but that he had recovered. I'll go myself and bring him to you."

"Do," said Connor, "an' leave us the moment you bring him."

It was more than an hour before the man returned, holding Fardorougha by the arm, and after having left him in the cell, he instantly locked it outside, and withdrew, as he had been desired. Connor ran to support his tottering steps; and wofully indeed did that unfortunate parent stand in need of his assistance. In the picture presented by Fardorougha, the unhappy young man forgot in a moment his own miserable and gloomy fate. There blazed in his father's eyes an excitement at once dead and wild, a vague fire without character, yet stirred by an incomprehensible energy wholly beyond the usual manifestations of thought or suffering. The son, on beholding him, shuddered, and not for the first time, for he had on one or two occasions before become apprehensive that his father's mind might, if strongly pressed, be worn down by the singular conflict of which it was the scene, to that most frightful of all maladies, insanity. As the old man, however, folded him in his feeble arms, and attempted to express what he felt, the unhappy boy groaned aloud, and felt even in the depth of his cell, a blush of momentary shame suffuse his cheek and brow. His father, notwithstanding the sentence that had been so shortly before passed upon his son; that father he perceived to be absolutely intoxicated, or, to use a more appropriate expression, decidedly drunk.

There was less blame, however, to be attached to Fardorougha on this occasion, than Connor imagined. When the old man swooned in the courthouse, he was taken by his neighbours to a public-house, where he lay for some minutes in a state of insensibility. On his recovery he was plied with burned whiskey, as well to restore his strength and prevent a relapse, as upon the principle that it would enable him to sustain with more firmness the dreadful and shocking

destiny which awaited his son. Actuated by motives of mistaken kindness, they poured between three and four glasses of this fiery cordial down his throat, which, as he had not taken so much during the lapse of thirty years before, soon reduced the feeble old man to the condition in which we have described him when entering the gloomy cell of the prison.

"Father," said Connor, "in the name of Heaven, who or what has put you into this dreadful state, especially when we consider the hard, hard fate that is over us, and upon us?"

"Connor," returned Fardorougha, not perceiving the drift of his question, "Connor, my son, I'll hang—hang him, that's one comfort."

"Who are you speaking about?"

"The villain sentence was passed on to—to-day. He'll swing—swing for the robbery; P—e will. We got him back out of that nest of robbers, the Isle o' Man —o' Man they call it, that he made off to, the villain!"

"Father dear, I'm sorry to see you in this state on sich a day; sich a black day to us. For *your* sake I am. What will the world say of it?"

"Connor, I'm in great spirits all out, exceptin' for something that I forget, that—that li—lies heavy upon me. That I mayn't sin, but I am—I am, indeed—for now that we've cotch him, we'll hang the villain up. Ha, ha, ha, it's a pleasant sight to see sich a fellow danglin' from a rope!"

"Father, sit down here, sit down upon this bad and comfortless bed, and keep yourself quiet for a little. Maybe you'll be better soon. Oh, why did you drink, and us in such trouble?"

"I'll not sit down; I'm very well able to stand," said he, tottering across the room. "The villain thought to starve me, Connor, but you heard the sentence that was passed on him to-day. Where's Honor, from me? she'll be glad whin, whin she hears it, and my son Connor will too; but he's, he's—where is Connor? bring me,

bring me to Connor. Ah, avourneen, Honor's heart's breaking for him; 'tany rate, the mother's heart—the mother's heart—she's laid low with an achin', sorrowful head for her boy."

"Father, for God's sake, will you try and rest a little? If you could sleep, father dear, if you could sleep."

"I'll hang P—e, I'll hang him; but if he gives back my money, I'll not touch him. Who are you?"

"Father dear, I'm Connor, your own son, Connor."

"I'll marry you and Una, then. I'll settle all the villain robbed me of on you, and you'll have every penny of it *afther my death*. Don't be keepin' me up, I can walk very well; ay, an' I'm in right good spirits. Sure the money's got, Connor, got back, every skillyeen of it. Ha, ha, ha, God be praised! God be praised! We've a right to be thankful; the world isn't so bad, afther all."

"Father, will you try and rest?"

"It's not bad, afther all; I won't starve, as I thought I would, now that the *arrighad* is got back from the villain. Ha, ha, ha, it's great, it's great. Connor, ahagur?"

"What is it, father dear?"

"Connor, sing me a song; my heart's up; it's light; arn't you glad? sing me a song."

"If you'll sleep first, father."

"The *Uligone*, Connor, or *Skuil agra*, or the *Troughа*, for, avourneen, avourneen, there must be sorrow in it, for my heart's low, and your mother's heart's in sorrow, an' she's lyin' far from us, an' her boy's not near her, an' her heart's sore, sore, an' her head achin', bekase her boy's far from her, an' she can't come to him!"

The boy, whose noble fortitude was unshaken during the formidable trial it had encountered in the course of that day, now felt overcome by this simple allusion to his mother's love. He threw his arms about his father's neck, and placing his head upon his bosom, wept aloud for many, many minutes.

"Hushth, Connor, hushth asthore, what makes *you* cry? Sure all will be right now that we've got back

the money. Eh? Ha, ha, ha, it's great luck, Connor, isn't great? An' you'll have it, you an' Una, *after my death*, for I won't starve for e'er a one o' yees."

"Father, father, I wish you would rest."

"Well, well, avick, I will; bring me to bed; you'll sleep in your own bed to-night. Your poor mother's head hasn't been off o' the place where your own lay, Connor. No, indeed; her heart's low, it's breakin', breakin', but she won't let anybody make your bed but herself. Oh, the mother's love, Connor! that mother's love—*that* mother's love! but, Connor—"

"Well, father dear?"

"Isn't there something wrong, avick? isn't there something not right, somehow?"

This question occasioned the son to feel as if his heart would literally burst to pieces, especially when he considered the circumstances under which the old man put it. Indeed, there was something so transcendently appalling in his intoxication, and in the wild but affecting tone of his conversation, that when joined to his pallid and spectral appearance, it gave a character, for the time being, of a mood that struck the heart with an image more frightful than that of madness itself.

"Wrong, father!" he replied, "all's wrong, and I can't understand it. It's well for you that you don't know the doom that's upon us now, for I feel how it would bring you down, and how it will, too. It will kill you, my father, it will kill you."

"Connor, come home, avick, come home; I'm tired, at any rate; come home to your mother, come, for her sake; I know I'm not at home, an' she'll not rest till I bring you safe back to her. Come now, I'll have no put-offs; you must come, I say. I ordher you; I can't and won't meet her widout you. Come, avick, an' you can sing me the song goin' home; come wid your own poor ould father, that can't live widout you; come, *a sullish machree*, I don't feel right here; we won't be properly happy till we go to your lovin' mother."

"Father, father, you don't know what you're making me suffer. What heart, blessed Heaven, can bear—"

The door of his cell here opened, and the turnkey stated that some five or six of his friends were anxious to see him, and, above all things, to take charge of his father to his own home. This was a manifest relief to the young man, who felt more deeply upon his unhappy father's account than his own.

"Some foolish friends," said he, "have given my father liquor, an' it has got into his head; indeed, it overcame him the more, as I never remember him to taste a drop of spirits during his life before. I can see nobody now, and him in this state; but if they wish me well, let them take care of him, and lave him safe at his own house, and tell them I'll be glad if I can see them tomorrow, or any other time."

With considerable difficulty Fardorougha was removed from Connor, whom he clung to with all his strength, attempting also to drag him away. He then wept bitterly, because he declined to accompany him home, that he might comfort his mother, and enjoy the imagined recovery of his money from P——e, and the conviction which he believed they had just succeeded in getting against that notorious defaulter.

END OF VOL. I.

NEW NATIONAL IRISH WORK.

Preparing for publication, in Monthly Parts, with Illustrations,

THE

CHRONICLES OF BALLYMACRUISKEEN,

WITH THE LIVES, DEATHS, MARRIAGES, AND OTHER MISFORTUNES OF ITS INHABITANTS,

BY WILLIAM CARLETON,

AUTHOR OF

"Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry," "Tales of Ireland," "Fardorougha the Miser," &c.

THAT literature in Ireland has, within the last few years, made a surprising progress, is a fact which cannot be disputed. The Irish public has, at the present moment, as good a taste for reading as any other public you could lay your hand on. Our Irish gentry are all acquainted with Sir Walter Scott, Lytton Bulwer, and Boz; and our Irish nobility are treading close upon their heels. There is no such thing now in existence as a Squireen; these most respectable worthies having, I fear, absolutely disappeared for ever; and Lady Morgan, the first and most vigorous Irish female writer in describing this class of characters, has a heavy part of that sin upon her conscience. Truly, the light of literature is doing much. Where now are our tithe proctors? Where the old rustic priest who used to dine with my lord, drink the pious and immortal memory with the squire, and sing jolly songs with the fox-hunting parson? Where are the old "Forties," whose bodies were claimed by the landlord, as their souls were by the priest, and whose only interest in their native soil lay in this—that they had hunger for their food, nakedness for their covering, and ignorance for their morality? These are, to be sure, all removed, and a new class of educated and reading men has sprung up in their place. Our barristers are learned in Shakspeare and Sheridan Knowles; our attorneys quote Byron and Cowper, and give *soirees* to the literati, or more substantial entertainment to the elect. This, it must be admitted, is a cheering and a wholesome state of things. Indeed, a great intellectual advancement is, God be praised for it, very visible in all classes. Our divines, if such a thing could be supposed possible, are becoming diviner and more controversial than ever. Our very passions and prejudices will all soon be regulated and improved by the progress of intellectual cultivation; so that it will be impossible for an Irish peasant to read a treatise upon the Integral Calculus without feeling his morals improved by it. We know that to understand the exact grounds upon which we hate and persecute each other will enable us to do both upon enlightened principles, and it surely is better to hate like Christians, than to conduct our resentments like those who abhor one creed merely because they happened to be born in another.

Perhaps, however, a work that would teach us the folly of party strife and religious rancour, even in their most enlightened and intellectual shape, might, after all, be as great a boon to the country as one of those treatises of controversy which continually issue from either side. A work, in fact, that will leave religion to be advanced by its respective pastors, and endeavour to lessen the bigotry and prejudice of all parties without giving offence to any.

It is, indeed, to be regretted that the modern imaginative literature of Ireland has been tinged, so far as religion is concerned, by too sharp and uncharitable a spirit. And although, in a country where controversial strife and the enmity of creeds have been called into such bitter and incessant action, it would be almost unreasonable to expect that the writers of any party should be exempt from this spirit; still it is to be regretted that we have had no popular works, otherwise useful to our country, but such as contain traces of the errors I am deprecating. I do not wish to exempt myself any more than others from the failing I allude to, yet, although, strictly and in point of truth, there is nothing in my writings that I could not fully justify, still there are passages which, by giving offence unnecessarily and unseasonably, I could now wish to be unwritten.

It is true, much has appeared of late years upon Irish life and manners; much, I may add, that is good, much that is bad, and more that is indifferent. Some of this has been produced by those who knew Ireland and her people well; some by those who knew them but indifferently; and other some by those who knew them not at all. Notwithstanding all, however, that has been done—and there has been much—there is still a prodigal supply of unwrought *materiel* lying in the country among all classes and conditions of our countrymen and countrywomen. Of this matter it is my purpose to avail myself, and that I may do so with more effect, I intend to comply with the wish of my publishers, which is to bring out the work in monthly parts—a mode of publication now quite fashionable. The work, however, shall not be an imitation of any one. I can confidently affirm, that in my former delineations of Irish life and manners, I have followed the steps of no predecessor, and I am resolved, that in whatever I may write for the future, I shall, if possible, imitate neither myself nor others.

It is true, that in writing an important work upon Ireland, it will not be possible for me, in handling past events, to avoid giving an occasional hard hit wherever either persecution or bigotry shall render it necessary—for under no circumstances will I ever shrink from the truth. In this, however, I shall be strictly impartial. On each side, God knows, there is and has been too much to condemn, and enough to laugh at. Good humour, however, so far as parties and creeds are concerned, will be the predominant spirit of the book. It is, in fact, my design that the work in question, if read in connexion with the Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry—to which

it may be considered a sequel—shall exhibit such a panoramic view of Irish life, characters, and manners, as may be nearly complete. Like the Traits and Stories, its pages will alternate with humour and pathos; that is, as far as I possess the power of delineating them. Old customs, superstitions, and usages, that either have passed away or are fast disappearing, will be described with truth and accuracy; so that the work will be, in this point of view, valuable to the lover of Irish social antiquities as well as to the general reader.

That the public, however, may still more clearly comprehend the character of the entertainment which I am providing for them, I will give them a peep into the larder, where they can have opportunity of seeing a few of the joints undressed, or what may be considered a rough bill of fare.

Rise and Progress of a village.
Decline and Fall of another.
Opposing Principles.
Good Landlord and Bad.
The Pelts of Castle Pelt—as Landlords—their system.
Silky Sisk, the Factotum.
The old Forties.
Kate Karney.
Glimpses at '98.
The Humours of an Irish Election.
Convert Hunting—an Irish Pastime.
The Two Converts.
Mat Kavanagh *redivivus*.
Priests and Parsons.
Controversy.
The Month's Mind.
Old Irish Dance—the *Hero Liege*.
The blessings of Conacre.
Poor Laws.
The Cow saddled.
Vagrants.
Workhouses.
Combination among the beggars.
The Crutch Conspiracy.
Battle of the Guardians.
Father O'Flaherty.
An Excommunication.
Coroner's Inquest.
Election Sermon.
Kate Karney's Wooer's.
Abduction.
Orange Lodge.
Grand Jury in the old style.
Willy Reilly and Cooleen Bawn—their Loves and Sorrows.
Swearing an Alibi.
Presbyterian Singing Meetings.
The Rev. Sergeant M'Swig.
Method of Keeping Lent.
Locality of Salvation.
Education.
New Schools and Old Masters.
Mat Kavanagh under Training.
Story of Alice Dun.
The Holy Cruiskeen.
Barny Green, the Polygamist—his own Chaplain.
The Struggles of Malachy O'More—his Ruin and Emigration.
Legend of Peggy Slevin—origin of the Air and Song.
The Rakes of Ballyfaddy.
The Murdered Landlord.
Judicial death of Silky Sisk.
Ribbonism.
Orange and Green.
Progress and Spirit of Irish Society.
Kate Karney—her character—Story wound up by her Marriage and Happiness.

The public will perceive that it is impossible, in a work as yet only projected, to state, with anything like absolute certainty, what

its actual contents may be. For instance, it is not unlikely that there are many things jotted down in the foregoing rough sketch, which, upon more mature consideration, may never appear in it; and that, on the contrary, there are other matters not mentioned in it at all, or even thought of, which may be entitled to prominent notice. I may also add, that this *congeries* of matter bears no reference whatsoever to the *order* in which it may appear in the book.

One word more in conclusion. The serious end and object of this work, as it has been of all my others, is, if possible, to improve the character of the peasantry of my native country, whose faults are the result more of circumstances than of vice, but whose virtues are their own, very often in spite of those circumstances. With their moral and physical welfare my heart is indentified; and with all their joys and sorrows I have always sympathized, and ever will until that heart shall have ceased to beat. So far I may, I trust, without presumption, claim the character of patriotism. I am, and have been, under no obligation to any party. From no party I can say, with strict truth, have I ever sought or ever received a favour, and from no party will I ever ask one. Should it come, it shall not be because of my seeking.

There are other matters in which I differ from my distinguished fellow-labourers. I am not, and never have been, a literary absentee. I have stuck to my country better a great deal than my country or any one in it has stuck to me. In that country has been published every line that has appeared from my pen, and in no publication beyond its green girdle have I ever written, though often solicited to do so. Whether this was wisdom or not is another thing—I merely state the fact.

Having thus said all I have to say, I can only add, if the blunder may be permitted me, that no exertion of mine shall be wanting to make the Chronicles of Ballymacruiskeen not only an agreeable but a useful work—such a one as may be read with pleasure as well as with profit by persons of every creed and party.

W. CARLETON.

Philadelphia: Carey & Hart, Chestnut-street. Sold by all Booksellers.

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY
REFERENCE DEPARTMENT

This book is under no circumstances to be taken from the Building

form 410